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ART. I.—REVIEW OF DR. OWEN ON THE CHURCH.

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(Continued.)

PROTRACTED as have been our extracts from, and comments upon, this chapter, the inherent importance of the subject warrants their length. And we cannot now leave it, without another extended extract upon a subject of great importance, and in the neglect of which our Churches are suffering severely. The author handles the question thus :

“Whether a Church may not, ought not, to take under its conduct, inspection, and rule, such as are not yet meet to be received into full communion ; such as the children and servants of those who are complete members of the Church. *Ans.* No doubt the Church, in its officers, may and ought to do so : and it is a great evil when it is neglected. For, (1.) They are to take care of parents and masters as such, and as unto the discharge of their duty in their families : which without an inspection into the condition of their children and servants, they cannot do. (2.) Households were constantly reckoned unto the Church,

when the heads of the families were entered into covenant. Luke xix. 9; Acts xvi. 15; Rom. xvi. 10-11; 1 Cor. i. 16; 2 Tim. iv. 19. (3.) Children do belong unto, and have an interest in, the parents' covenant; not only in the promise of it which gives them right unto baptism; but in the profession of it in the Church covenant, which gives them a right unto all the privileges of the Church whereof they are capable, until they voluntarily relinquish their claim to them. (4.) Baptizing the children of Church members, giving them thereby an admission into the visible Catholic Church, puts an obligation on the officers of the Church, to take care, what in them lieth, that they may be kept and preserved meet members of it, by a due watch over them, and instruction of them. (5.) Though neither the Church nor its privileges be continued and preserved, as of old by carnal generation; yet, because of the nature of the dispensation of God's covenant, wherein he hath promised to be a God unto believers and their seed, the advantage of the means of a gracious education in such families, and of conversion and edification in the ministry of the Church, ordinarily the continuation of the Church, is to depend on the addition of members out of the families already incorporated in it." * * *

"The duty of the Church towards this sort of persons consists, (1.) in prayer for them; (2.) Catechetical instruction of them according to their capacities; (3.) Advice to their parents concerning them; (4.) Visiting of them in the families whereunto they do belong; (5.) Encouragement of them or admonition, according as there is occasion. (6.) Direction for a due preparation unto the joining themselves to the Church in full communion; (7.) Exclusion of them from a claim unto the participation of the especial privileges of the Church, where they render themselves visibly unmeet for them, and unworthy of them."

"The neglect of this duty brings unconceivable prejudice unto Churches, and, if continued in, will prove their ruin. * * * And it doth arise, (1.) From an ignorance of the duty in most that are concerned in it. (2.) From the paucity of officers in most Churches, both teaching and ruling who are to attend unto it. (3.) The want of a teacher or catechist, who should attend only to the instruction of this sort of persons. (4.) Want of a sense of their duty in parents and masters. (1.) In not valuing aright the great privilege

of having their children and servants under the inspection, care and blessing of the Church. (2.) In not instilling into them a sense of it, with the duties that are expected from them, on the account of their relation to the Church. (3.) In not bringing them duly unto the Church assemblies. (4.) In not preparing and disposing them unto an actual entrance into full communion with the Church. (5.) Or not advising with the elders of the Church about them. And, (6.) especially by an indulgence unto that loose and careless kind of education in conformity to the world which generally prevails. Hence it is, that most of them on various accounts and occasions, drop off here and there from the communion of the Church, and all relation thereunto, without the least respect unto them, or inquiry after them; Churches being supplied by such as are occasionally converted in them."—pp. 367-9.

We submit this to our readers without comment.

Chapter II. treats "of the formal cause of a particular Church," which he defines to be,

"An obediential act of believers, in such numbers as may be useful unto the ends of Church edification, jointly giving up themselves unto the Lord Jesus Christ, to do and observe all his commands, resting on the promise of his especial presence thereon; giving and communicating by his law, all the rights, powers, and privileges of his Church unto them; and in a mutual agreement among themselves, jointly to perform all the duties required of them in that state, with an especial subjection unto the spiritual authority of rules and rulers appointed by Jesus Christ."—p. 375. Again:

"The things ensuing are clear and evident.

"1. The Lord Christ by his authority hath appointed and instituted this Church state as that there should be such Churches, as we have proved before.

"2. That by his word and law he hath granted powers and privileges unto this Church, and prescribed duties unto all belonging to it, wherein they can have no concernment who are not incorporated into such a Church.

"3. That therefore he doth require and command all his disciples to join themselves in such Church relations as we have proved; warranting them to do so by his word and command; wherefore,

"4. This joining themselves, whereon depends all their interest in Church powers and privileges, all their obliga-

tion unto Church duties, is a voluntary act of the obedience of faith to the authority of Jesus Christ, nor can it be any thing else.

"5. Herein do they give themselves to the Lord and to one another, by their officers, in a peculiar manner, according to the will of God; 2 Cor. viii. 5."

We see not on what grounds any Christian can take exceptions to this view of the manner in which, the Church state is constituted—and we think it sheds light on some contested points.

I. *Whether a Church is identical with its embodied members.* The affirmative of this has been asserted and maintained. But we should suppose that not only doctors, but tyros in divinity would know better. That the voluntary association of believers together, is requisite to the visible church state, is clear. But does mere conjunction give them the form and being of a church? Human beings, faith, repentance, knowledge of the Bible, are supposed and required unto the church state; but do either or all, of themselves, constitute it? They must not merely be associated voluntarily, (i. e. without compulsion,) but associated according to the form and manner, which the Lord Jesus hath prescribed for the Church state. As Owen says, "they become a Church, or enter into a Church state by mutual confederation, or solemn agreement for the performance of all the duties which the Lord Christ hath prescribed unto his disciples in such Churches, and in order to the exercise of the power wherewith they are intrusted according to the rule of his word." Is any other fraternity or combination the Church, whether composed of church members, or not? Do church members by forming a manufacturing company, become *a* Church, or *the* Church in that connexion? Do they by forming a charitable association, or moral society, or association for collecting moneys for disseminating religion, especially when leagued with many of the confessedly unconverted, or by any other form of embodiment, except the Church state appointed in the Bible, become identical with the Church? We will not waste argument on so plain a question.

II. It has been contended that men have a natural right to associate together for religious purposes. That antecedently to the gift of revelation, men are bound by the light of nature to unite in the public worship of God we admit

and insist. That in the kingdom and Church of Christ which are of special divine institution and revelation, which presuppose and reassert this duty dictated by natural conscience, and which reveal and specify the only way in which it can be done acceptably to God, natural rights have any place whatever, is an absurd supposition. On worldly and temporal affairs, men are born into certain social relations, associations, duties and privileges. And it is their unquestionable prerogative to associate for what ends they please, and as they please, provided they infringe upon no law, and usurp not the functions of the state. But even in this case, such associations are not allowed the rights and immunities of persons in holding and defending their property, and are treated in law as non-entities, unless expressly chartered; and their privileges are limited to the grants of their charter. But as to any rights in the kingdom of God, we hold that men are by nature children of wrath, and have no natural right or title to any thing but eternal damnation, which alone can be averted by the provisions of sovereign, free, unmerited grace. If they have, then grace is no more grace. What right then of any sort or name have men to adopt methods of procedure in what is a pure gratuity to themselves, unless expressly permitted by the donor?—Shall beggars be choosers? Above all, shall condemned rebels, creatures, receiving the free gift of pardon and eternal life from their offended Maker, *claim a right* of adopting what methods they please for its conveyance to their fellow mortals? Has he commanded men to associate Church wise, and in this state to do all things whatsoever which he hath commanded them, and especially to further the extension and continuance of his kingdom, and shall men claim that they have a right to associate otherwise at their liking, to fulfil such particular commandments as they choose? Is it not confederating according to the terms which he hath prescribed, and this alone which he hath promised to attend with his presence and blessing? With the same propriety it might be claimed that men have a right to covenant *half-way* to serve the Lord, or to observe any day as holy which they please, as well as the Sabbath. But the question, “whence is it, from heaven, or of men?” demolishes all such claims. The Christian religion and all its doctrines and institutions, are heaven-descended. Man can-

not interpolate it with his own inventions without vitiating it; else the law of the Lord is no longer perfect; and man is wiser than God. But unfortunately for this natural right of setting up religious institutions according to the wit and will of man; "every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up," and the woe of woes is denounced as well against him that addeth to, as him that taketh from the Book of life.

III. Men are not less voluntary in joining or associating together in a Church, than any other society whatsoever. That is, they are not coerced by any outward or human compulsion, but act freely and spontaneously. It is an act of the obedience of faith to the commands of Christ, requiring us to unite in the way of his own appointment. An act of faith it cannot be, unless it be hearty and of choice.—In this sense Owen often styles it a voluntary society, as contrasted with those unchristian associations calling themselves churches, into which multitudes have been forced by the authority and power of men. This must be borne in mind, as the word voluntary in our time when applied to societies, has a technical sense implying that they originate with the will of man instead of the appointment of God, and does not respect the manner of joining them, in which men are no more free than in joining the church.

IV. It appears that Owen who was one of the fathers of congregationalism, supposed that men entered the Church state, for the purpose of doing, and pledging themselves to do, in that state, all Christ's commands. But it is extensively taught and believed that the congregational organization is unqualified for the discharge of that great command, "Preach the gospel to every creature," and must rely on other organizations to perform this work.

Having treated of the church as respects its essence and being, the author proceeds in several subsequent chapters to treat of it as organic with its power, rule and officers.—We regret that our limits will not admit of a full review of this part of the work, which is so masterly in determining what offices Christ hath appointed over his own house, the way by which men are lawfully introduced to them, and the characteristics, functions, and duties which properly belong to them. We shall make but a few extracts touching some principles of fundamental importance, hoping that some of

our readers may be induced to study the treatise itself, and enrich themselves from its vast treasure of scriptural knowledge, and spiritual wisdom.

"There is no rule in the Church but what is ministerial, consisting in an authoritative declaration and application of the commands and will of Christ, unto the souls of men, wherein those who exercise it are 'servants of the Church for its edification for Jesus' sake.' (2 Cor. iv. 5.)

"It hence follows that the introduction of human authority into the Church in any kind, destroyeth the nature of it, and makes his kingdom to be of this world, and some of his disciples to be in their measure like princes of the Gentiles; nor is it oftentimes from themselves that they are not more like them than they are. The Church is the house of Christ, his family, his kingdom. To act any power in its rule, which is not his, which derives not from him, which is not communicated by his legal grant; or to act any power in its rule, by ways, processes, rules, and laws not of his own appointment, is an invasion of his right and dominion."—p. 380

After showing that the ends of the Church state are not attainable without officers, he proceeds to say that he has appointed them; Eph. iv. 13, 14, and that the acts of Christ herein may be reduced to these heads.

1. "He hath instituted and appointed the offices themselves and made a grant of them unto the Church for its edification. As also he hath determined and limited the powers and duties of the officers. It is not in the power of any, or of all the churches in the world, to appoint any office or officer, which Christ hath not appointed."—p. 386

2. "By virtue of his relation unto the Church as its head, of his kingly power over it, and care of it, wherever the continuation and edification of the church in this world do depend; wherever he hath a Church called, he furnisheth some persons with such gifts, abilities, and endowments, as are necessary to the discharge of such offices in the powers, works, and duties of them."

In a great variety of forms, he asserts that when these gifts are wanting, "it is no more in the power of men to constitute officers, than to erect or create an office in the Church;" and that "no man can by virtue of any outward rites, order, or power, be really vested in the ministry."—Let no graceless or ungifted man then flatter himself, that

the imposition of hands by council, presbytery or even diocesan bishop, infuses any new virtue, sanctity, or authority which he did not previously possess. Let none who have the oversight of bringing forward men to the ministry, suppose that they can make those true ministers of the Lord Jesus, whom he hath not made such by the communication of ministerial gifts, and inward call to the work. Nevertheless Owen well observes, that the acts of such ministers are not to be pronounced invalid, until they are orderly deposed.

3. "This communication of office-power on the part of Christ, consists in his institution and appointment of the way and means, whereby persons gifted and qualified by himself, ought actually to be admitted into their offices." This he elsewhere declares to be by call of the people, and solemn ordination with the imposition of hands, without which they cannot orderly discharge the office.

4. "He hath hereon given commands unto the whole Church to submit themselves unto the authority of these officers in the discharge of their office, who are so appointed, so prepared or qualified, so called by himself, and to obey them in all things, *according unto the limitations which himself also hath given unto the power and authority of such officers.*"

Hence, our author contends, it is evident that the Church does not delegate a power to their officers which was formally inherent in itself previously, but they designate the persons who thereupon are entrusted with office-power by Christ himself. "For the power of the Church is nothing but a right to perform Church duties in obedience unto the commands of Christ and according unto his mind." And this, we think it clearly is all the right, natural or spiritual, which men have or can have, in the kingdom of God.

In chapter IV. our author commences treating of the actual officers of the Church. He observes that most disputes as to their functions and authority, have arisen from lust of pre-eminence, power, and wealth.

"If men would but a little seriously consider what there is in that care of souls, even of all of them over whom they pretend Church power, rule, or jurisdiction; and what it is to give an account concerning them before the judgment seat of Christ, it would abate of their earnestness in contending for the enlargement of their cures."—p. 392. On

reading this passage, it struck us forcibly, that if such a contemplation should become prevalent in our day, it might lead some ministers who are seeking to alter their location, to covet a charge of a different sort, and would also give another aspect to some important controversies now before the public.

"The officers of the Church in general are of two sorts; 'bishops and deacons;' Phil. i. 1—and their work is distributed into 'prophecy and ministry;' Rom. xii. 6 and 7.

"The bishops or elders are of two sorts: 1. Such as have authority to teach and administer the sacrament, which is commonly called the power of order, and also of ruling, which is called a power of jurisdiction corruptly; and some have only power for rule. * * *

"Those of the first sort are distinguished into pastors and teachers.

"The distinction between the elders themselves, is not like that between elders and deacons, which is as unto the whole kind or nature of the office: but only with respect unto work and order, whereof we shall treat distinctly."—pp. 392-3.

He argues most conclusively, and refutes all objections to the contrary that the word bishop in Scripture means pastor of a single congregation, and nothing more; that in the primitive Churches there was no bishop exercising authority over pastors, or having any pre-eminence except as, for the sake of order and decency, one was chosen to preside at their meetings as *primus inter pares*: that the Scripture knows no inequality among ministers of the same sort, ordinary or extraordinary; and give no more intimation of an arch-bishop or arch-deacon, than of an arch-prophet, or arch-apostle, or arch-evangelist.

In respect to the exercise of ministerial gifts, without regular outward call and ordination, he pronounces it the foundation of all disorder and confusion, and not to be admitted at all, subject however to these limitations:

"1. Many things performed by virtue of office in a way of authority, may be performed by others not called to the office, in a way of charity. Such are the moral duties of exhorting, admonishing, comforting, instructing, and praying with and for one another. 2. Spiritual gifts may be exercised unto the edification of others, without office-power, when order and opportunity do require it. But the con-

stant exercise of spiritual gifts in preaching, with a refusal of undertaking a ministerial office, or without design to do so upon lawful call, cannot be approved. 3. The rules proposed concern only ordinary cases, and the ordinary state of the Church; extraordinary cases are accompanied with a warranty in themselves for extraordinary actings and duties."—pp. 406-7.

We think that adherence to the following principles would conduce to the stability of the pastoral relation, and prevent many short and sad ministerial settlements, which are broken up in grief and sorrow. "The Church is not to call or choose any one to office who is not known unto them; of whose frame of spirit and walking, they have not had some experience; not a novice or one lately come among them. * * * But yet in making a judgment hereof, one directive means is the advice of other elders and Churches, which they are obliged to make use of by virtue of the communion of Churches, and the avoidance of offence in their walk in that communion." If Churches would demand a longer trial of candidates, and if candidates would submit to the trial with patience, they would be much less likely to be settled over discontented and turbulent congregations, which so far from sustaining and cheering them, shape all their efforts to render their situation unpleasant, and thus force them away. It is not uncommon now to call ministers after hearing them a single Sabbath, and that not seldom through a committee. This is surely making light of the sanctity and permanence of the pastoral relation.

Owen argues at great length to prove the office of ruling elder to be of Scriptural institution, to answer all exceptions to the proof-texts, and to evince its importance and necessity by delineating its functions and duties. This office was retained in a large proportion of the first Churches in New England, but at length fell into total disuse, Dr. Dwight says, he knows not why. The Saybrook Platform proves that it was in existence at the time of the formation of that instrument. We regret being unable to detail Owen's argument at length. But it may be briefly stated thus, (1.) The New Testament Churches are every where spoken of as having a plurality of elders.

(2.) That these were of two sorts, viz. such as both preach and rule, and such as rule only is evident from 1 Tim. v. 17: "Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double

honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." In a critical analysis of many pages, he vindicates this translation of the original against all objections, and says, that "on the first proposal of the text, a rational man who is unprejudiced, and who never heard of the controversy about ruling elders, can hardly avoid an apprehension that there are two sorts of elders, some that labor in word and doctrine, and some who do not so do." He then condenses the whole into the following syllogism :

"Preaching elders, although they rule well, are not worthy of double honor, unless they labor in word and doctrine. But there are elders who rule well that are worthy of double honor, though they do not labor in word and doctrine. Therefore, there are elders that rule well, who are not teaching or preaching elders, that is, who are ruling elders only."—p. 488.

(3.) That pastors cannot discharge aright their especial duty in the ministry of the word and prayer, and yet attend adequately to the rule and discipline of the Church, and the personal walk and conversation of its members, without the co-operation of these "helps" and "governments." The general prevalence of Church committees in New England appears to be a tacit admission of this fact. These points would appear much stronger, if set forth more in detail ; but this is impossible, as the subject itself is sufficient to occupy an entire article. We are free to say that the author has convinced us that the subject is entitled to thorough investigation ; and we have said thus much in the hope of calling attention to it.

We are obliged to omit the consideration of the author's views of the duties of the various officers of the Church, and of excommunication, which have given us much instruction and peace. These, with his various tracts concerning the walk, duties, and relations of persons in the Church state would require a full article of themselves, and would furnish most edifying materials for it. We can have no better wish for our American Churches, than that they were under the guidance of the principles which he sets forth. One topic remains, however, of the first importance, in relation to existing discussions, which must be noticed before we conclude. It is the "communion of Churches," which is the subject of our author's closing chapter. No

subject appears to be less understood than the grounds, manner, extent, and ends of the association of Congregational Churches together. And we shall endeavor, as fully as we can, in a short space, to exhibit the author's mind upon this subject. He introduces it thus :

"Churches so appointed and established, in order as hath been declared, ought to hold communion among themselves, or with each other, as unto all the ends of their institution and order ; for these are the same in all. Yea, the general end of them is in order of nature considered antecedently unto their institution in particular. This end is the edification of the body of Christ in general, or the Church Catholic. The promotion hereof is committed jointly and severally unto all particular Churches. Wherefore with respect hereunto, they are obliged unto communion among themselves, *which is their consent, endeavor and conjunction in and for the promotion of the edification of the Catholic Church, and therein their own, as they are parts and members of it.*"—p. 569.

As more fully explanatory of what he intends by this edifying of the body of Christ, we will quote a passage from another chapter.

"Yea, one of the principal ends of the institution and preservation of Churches, is the conversion of souls, and when there are no more to be converted, there shall be no more Church on earth. To enlarge the kingdom of Christ to diffuse the light and savour of the gospel, to be subservient unto the calling of the elect, or gathering all the sheep of Christ into his fold, are things that God designs by his Churches in this world."—p. 444.

"All Churches, on their first institution, quickly found themselves indigent and wanting, though not as unto their being, power, and order ; yet as unto their well-being, with their preservation in truth and order, upon extraordinary occurrences, as also with respect unto their usefulness and serviceableness, unto the general end of furthering the edification of the Church catholic. The care hereof, and the making provision for this defect, was committed by our Lord Jesus Christ, unto the apostles during their lives, which Paul calls *ἡ μέριμνα πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐκκλησίαις* ; 1 Cor. xi. 18. 'The care of all the Churches.' For what was only a pressing care and burden unto them, was afterwards contended for

by others, as a matter of dignity and power; the pretence of it in one especially, being turned into a cursed domination, under the style and title of 'Servus servorum Dei.'

"But if a thousand pretences should be made of supplying Churches, defects, after the decease of the Apostles, by any other way, or means, besides this of the equal communion of Churches among themselves, they will be all found destitute of any countenance from the Scripture, primitive antiquity, the nature, use, and end of Churches, yea, of the Christian religion itself. * * * But there is no place for such imaginations, until it be proved, either that our Lord Jesus Christ hath not appointed the mutual communion of Churches among themselves by their own consent; or that it is not sufficient for the preservation of the union, and furtherance of the edification, of the Church catholic, whereunto it is designed.

* * * "Herein then, we acknowledge, lieth the great difference which we have with others about the state of the Church of Christ in this world: we do believe that the mutual communion of particular Churches amongst themselves, in an equality of power and order, though not of gifts and usefulness, is the only way appointed by our Lord Jesus Christ after the death of the Apostles, for the attaining of the general end of all particular Churches, which is the edification of the Church catholic in faith, love, and peace. Other ways and means have been found out in the world for this end."—pp. 570—1.

"But it must be moreover premised, that whereas this union of Churches is radically and essentially the same among all Churches in the world, yet, as unto the ordinary actual exercise of the duties of it, it is confined and limited by Divine providence unto such churches, as the natural means of the discharge of such duties may extend unto; that is, unto those which are planted within such lines of communication, such precincts or boundaries of places and countries, as may not render the mutual performance of such duties insufferably difficult. Yet is not the world itself so wide but that all places being made pervious by navigation, this communion of Churches may be visibly professed, and in some instances practiced among all Churches, 'from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, where the name of Christ is known among the Gentiles.'—pp. 371—2.

"But this communion of Churches cannot be duly ap-

prehended, unless we inquire and determine wherein their union doth consist, For communion is an act of union, that receives both its nature and power from it, or by virtue of it. For of what nature soever the union of things distinct in themselves be, of the same is the communion that they have among themselves."—pp. 572—3

He proceeds to state that in the Church of Rome, the Pope is the head, centre, and fountain of all union, and communion in that Church is of a character original and suited to this union. Having shown that by this order, all true communion of Churches whatever is subverted, he proceeds to declare that the only real union subsisting between particular Churches,

"Consists in that which gives form, life, and being unto the Church catholic, with the addition of what belongs to them as they are in particular. And this is, that they have all one and the same God and Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, one faith and one doctrine of faith, one hope of their calling on the promised inheritance, one regeneration, one baptism, one bread and wine; united unto God and Christ in one spirit, through the bond of faith and love."—p. 576.

"Two things concur unto the completing of this union of Churches. 1. Their union or relation to Christ. 2. That which they have among themselves.

"I. The Lord Christ himself is the original and spring of this union, and every particular Church is united unto him as its head, besides which, with or under which, it hath none. * * * And unless this union be dissolved, unless a Church be disunited from Christ, it cannot be so from the Catholic Church, nor from any true Church of Christ in particular; however it may be dealt withal by others in the world. * * *

"II. There concurreth hereunto an union among themselves, I mean all particular Churches throughout the world, in whom the Church catholic doth act its power and duty. * * * And the bond hereof is that especial love which Christ requireth among all his disciples, acting itself unto all the ends of edification of the whole body." * * *

"This is that blessed oneness which the Lord Christ prayed for so earnestly for his disciples, that they might be one in the Father and the Son, one among themselves, and made perfect in one." * * *

"This union of the Catholic Church in all particular

Churches, is always the same, invisible, unchangeable, comprehending all the Churches in the world at all times."—p. 577-78.

"These things being premised, I proceed unto that which is our present inquiry, namely, Wherein the communion of particular Churches among themselves doth consist." * * *

"I. In the belief of the same doctrine of truth, which is according unto Godliness, the same articles of faith, and the public profession thereof; so that every one of them is the ground and pillar of the same truth.

"II. This communion of faith respects the Church itself as its material object, For it is required hereunto, that we believe that the Lord Christ hath had in all ages, and especially hath in that wherein we live, a Church on the earth. * * *

"This communion of Churches in faith, consists much in the principal fruit of it; namely, Prayer. So it is stated, Eph. ii. 18. 'For through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.' And that therein the communion of the catholic Church doth consist, the Apostle declares in the following verses. 19-22. * * *

4. The unity of faith in all Churches, affecteth communion among them, in the administration of the same sacraments of baptism and the supper of the Lord. * * *

"5. They have also by faith communion herein, in that all Churches do profess subjection unto the authority of Christ in all things, and an obligation upon them to do and observe all whatsoever he hath commanded." pp. 579-82.

"The outward acts of communion among Churches, proceeding from this love, and the obligation that is on them to promote their mutual edification, may be referred unto two heads of advice and assistance.

"Churches have communion unto their mutual edification, by advice in synods or councils, which must in this place be considered."

"Synods are the meetings of divers Churches by their messengers or delegates, to consult and determine of such things as are of common concernment unto them all, by virtue of the communion which is exercised in them. pp. 583-4

In favor of such synods, our author urges that the light of nature teaches that all societies of one kind as to original, rule, and end, are obliged to advise in common for their common good; that compacted together as they are into the

body of Christ by one indwelling spirit, no single member can discharge its proper office without a joint acting with the other members of the same body; that in many instances particular Churches can in no other way fulfil the end of their institution in furthering the edification of the Church catholic: that inasmuch as every member of a particular Church is also a member of the Church catholic, the rule prescribed by our Saviour, Matt. xviii. virtually gives the parties a privilege of being heard and judged as to their interest therein: and lastly that the example of the Apostles acting under the infallible conduct of the Holy Ghost, Acts xv. gives them the nature of a divine institution.

The proper business of synods, he describes to be the care of all those matters in which the communion of Churches consists. 1. The preservation of pure doctrine. If differences or doubts arise about it, or heresis be broached in any Church or Churches, which they are unable to suppress, this is the last external refuge that is left for the communion of Churches in the same faith. 2. To preserve the peace, order, and unity of particular Churches, and compose all discords and strifes. 3. To correct any mal-administration of discipline, whereby any conceive themselves injured. 4. To preserve the purity of worship, manners and conversation unblemished in Churches.

In regard to their extent and bounds, these should be regulated by convenience, facility of assembling, and adaptation to the end in view. Churches near each other ought to be in readiness to assemble on all occasions of common concernment. The members composing such synods are to be such as are delegated by the Churches; but the elders or officers, some of them at least ought to be the principal, because on several accounts they are best qualified.

The proper power and authority of these synods he thus declares:

"The authority of a synod declaring the mind of God from the Scripture in doctrine, or giving counsel as unto practice synodically unto them whose proper representatives are present in it, whose decrees and determinations are to be received and submitted unto on evidence of their truth and necessity, as recommended by the authority of the synod from the promised presence of Christ, and the example given by the Apostles, Acts. xv.

"Hence it is evident, that in and after such synods, it is

in the power of Churches concerned, humbly to consider and weigh, (1.) The evidences of the presence of Christ in them from the manner, causes, and ends of their assembling, and from their deportment therein. (2.) What regard in their constitutions and determinations, there hath been unto the word of God, and whether in all things it hath had its due preeminence. (3.) How all their determinations have been educed from its truth, and are confirmed by its authority. p. 598.

From this synopsis of the author's views of the communion of Churches, in which we concur, and which more copious extracts would more fully evince to be just and scriptural, we deduce the following conclusions.

1. That all the true Churches of Christ on earth have an actual invisible communion with one another, whether it assume a visible form or not.

2. That all Churches as far as possible ought to make this communion manifest.

3. That by virtue of it, they are bound actually to unite in such numbers as may be conducive to the edification of the Church catholic, and jointly adopt all those measures, according to divine appointment for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom, which singly they are unable to carry into effect.

4. That this union is Church-wise and not otherwise; perfectly and alone adequate to the edifying of the body of Christ, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part; is alone known to scripture and primitive antiquity; and that any other sort of union got up to supply its place despoils it of its true beauty, glory, and efficacy.

5. That as unity of faith, doctrine, and order in conformity to the word of God, is presupposed unto the invisible universal communion of all the saints, so visible and professed unity in these things is a pre-requisite to visible communion in those Churches which exercise it, with due allowance for those differences in smaller points, which are incident to the best of men in this state of imperfection, in which "we know but in part."

6. That all corruption of the Scripture doctrine order, or practice to the full extent of its existence necessarily mars this communion; and if it reach fundamentals, and be persisted in, ultimately destroys it.

7. That non-communion necessarily ensues at least be-

tween those who regard each other as heretical upon vital points of doctrine and order.

8. That if any Church or set of Churches, deem any form of worship, doctrine, or government according to the mind of God, they cannot with safety, or with a good conscience forsake it, on any consideration whatever, and that to depart from it for the sake of union with any other class of Churches whatever, is to leave Christ and follow men. As our author says, no one can be obliged to disobey Christ for the sake of avoiding schism.

9. Therefore no man who regards the Church to which he belongs as constituted according to the word of God, and as "holding fast the Head" in doctrine, order, and practice, ought to stigmatize it as a sect, or sinful secession from the body of Christ. Nor ought existing Christian denominations to be lumped together indiscriminately under the reproachful epithet of sects, nor ought any of them to be styled or regarded as such, except so far as it appears to have departed from the commands and institutions of Christ, in doctrines, order, faith, and charity.

10. Although there may be good Christians in denominations which are unsound in doctrine and order, yet for the sake of communion with these we are not obliged visibly to commune with and recognize the Churches to which they belong, as being according to the mind of Christ; for no outward barriers can obstruct the invisible communion between all the members of the Church Catholic.

11. It is not necessary to the doing of things Church-wise, that all the Churches on earth do them jointly, or that more than a single Church transact them.

12. By virtue of the communion of Churches, there subsists a special communion or fellowship between pastors who are over them in the Lord, and hold one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father, whose cement is "charity which is the bond of perfectness." It is wrong therefore to style the pastoral associations, conferences and unions in New England voluntary societies, meaning thereby that they are non-ecclesiastical, or without divine warrant.

Lastly.—The Churches in their joint action for the promotion of religion, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom, have not, as many would fain represent, any authority or power, except to consult the Scriptures to learn the will

of God on the doubtful subject, and their recommendations are to bear the divine authority to men's consciences as an inducement to compliance.

With the statement of these conclusions, we leave the subject, fearing longer to tax the patience of our readers, already, doubtless, wearied. We can truly say, that we have been instructed and delighted with these treatises on Church government, especially the last, and we are persuaded that very many ministers and laymen, if they peruse it, will find themselves greatly enlightened, comforted, and edified. It is no trivial matter of which it treats—It enters directly and fundamentally into the whole nature, structure, and economy of the visible kingdom of Christ. We regret that it is so scarce, and inaccessible, being seldom found separately from the edition of Owen's entire works, which few can afford to purchase. The copy which we have had in making out this review, is borrowed from an individual living fifty miles distant. We know not how any publisher of books could better subserve the cause of Christ, and especially the interests of Congregational Churches, than by giving it a republication.

ART. II.—REVIEW OF WAYLAND ON THE LIMITATIONS
OF HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY, AND JAMES WOOD ON
OLD AND NEW DIVINITY.

(Continued from page 544.)

It is written that the devil was a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies, John viii. 44. The temptation, is the first that we hear of his work of deception, and death. The figure by which he then worked was a square: unique, for it has nothing in common with the true figure but the number of sides; but it contains all the elements and properties of the human triangle: and is in fact its genesis and original. The devil laid down his four principles as postulates; as axiomatic. 1. Ye shall not die. 2. Your eyes

shall be open. 3. Ye shall be as gods. 4. Ye shall know good and evil. Upon this basis, all principles are determined by *voluntary* and *utilitarian* tendencies; the law of God is made void; and the rectitude of action settled by its consequences on human happiness. His own perfection and pleasure man is *free* to consult, as the chief end of his existence; and his understanding has strength sufficient to arrive at the knowledge of the truth in respect to his own happiness, virtue, honor and peace. Here is the fraternity of the human triangle; for it is the devil, who has "deceived the whole world;" Rev. xii. 9; and here is the beginning of his work: "the head of the serpent" which "the seed of the woman shall bruise;" the very work of the devil, which the Son of God was manifested to destroy, 1 John iii. 8; John xviii. 37; Heb. ii. 14. All men are, by nature, the children of wrath, and believe the doctrine of their father the devil; Gen. iii. 15; 1 John iii. 10; Eph. ii. 3; John viii. 38-48. They believe they have life in themselves, that their eyes are open; that they are as gods; and that they do know good and evil; in other words, all men are naturally resting upon satan's square or its equivalent, the human triangle: and hence their fundamental dependence is upon themselves, upon the flesh. They love their own thoughts, ways and works; though they are all wholly unlike and opposed to those of God. Isaiah lv. 8, 9; Gen. vi. 5. Hence the universality of the call to repentance and faith. *To repent*, is to renounce the devil's doctrines, the human triangle, and to despair of all hope from self. John ix. 41. *To believe*, is to receive the principles of truth only from the divine testimony; and to repose the eternal hopes of the soul upon the grace and truth and power of Christ. John xvii. 6-9.

The great work of satan is to keep men in the faith of his lying doctrines. 2 Cor. iv. 4; Rev. xx. 10; Matt. xiii. 19, 39; Luke viii. 12; Eph. vi. 11, 12; 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26; Heb. ii. 14; 1 Peter v. 8, 9; Rev. xii. 9. In our notice of the history of the "doctrines of devils," and their influence upon the Church and individuals, we shall not speculate about "*how* these things can be;" we shall leave the *ultima ratio* and *modus* to the Jews and the Greeks. John iii. 9; 1 Cor. i. 22; Matt. xvi. 1-5, 12. Our concern will be for *FACTS*; and therefore, we shall look for *testimony*. John. iii. 11, 33, 36; and xvii. 6-8, 26.

We have seen the triangle embraces the constitution of satan's kingdom: that dynasty is not formally *proderit*; but *anti-Christ*. Satan does not call men his vassals or slaves; nay he is too subtle to style them royal cousins or brothers, faithful leagues or allies. He says to men, "Ye shall be as gods." He never said to any, "Fall down and worship me," Matt. iv. 9, save to the man Christ Jesus; and as *He knew him*, even serpentine diplomacy was obliged, for once, to be explicit, and to come direct to the point. But in dealing with us, who are blind, it is the old text: "Ye shall be as gods"—"your eyes shall be open"—"ye shall not die"—"ye shall know good and evil." Here is the cause of the deadly poison of that old serpent the devil; here is the fundamental law of the kingdom of darkness; and upon this square is erected every form of false religion that ever was in the world. Among all the "*isms*" which have been among men, we have never seen one comprehensive enough to include all forms of error but "*EGOISME*"; this is nomen generalissimum, and will embrace every form of anti-Christ.

The false doctrine of Satan in respect to the *condemnation*, to the *penalty of the law*, to the *curse*, was the death of man; and ever since the *promise of grace*, it has been the great work of the devil to deceive men as to the nature of the *BLESSING*, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; and this he accomplishes most successfully by his old philosophy, concealing and denying the nature, effects and desert of sin.

Let us now proceed, as proposed, to notice the operation of the human triangle on the church and on individuals; and herein we shall treat of the church in her political organization as she is *seen*; for we have this treasure in an earthen vessel; there is a wheel within a wheel, an imperium in imperio. And we find on examination not the *good*, but the *evil doings* of the Church, the topics of record in the chronicles of history sacred and profane. The story of the invisible church is only read in the annals of Sovereign mercy and redeeming love; in the wonderful works of God; Psalms cv. and cvi. We read of action and of passion; of doing and of suffering; of the struggles between the flesh and the Spirit; we see "two nations and two manner of people."

Immediately after the fall, the first pair fall to work upon triangular principles, and their attempts to hide the naked-

ness of their souls from the knowledge of God, when they heard *his voice* and were *afraid*, is an instructive and affecting comment on the expedients and sufficiency of human ability. Gen. iii. 7-11.

We find Cain working upon the same principles. He had no doubt of his personal competency, in all matters connected with worship; he brought such as he had, according to his ability, for an offering; and claims, as a matter of *right*, that his *doings* should be respected; for when himself and offering were rejected, he felt that *injustice* had been done him; "his countenance fell." Gen. iv. 5. He was manifestly upon the old covenant of works, Rom. iv. 4; and according to its tenor, the Lord dealt with him. "If thou *doest well* shalt thou not be accepted; and if thou *doest not well*, sin lieth at the door." Gen. iv. 7; Rom. x. 5; Gal. iii. 12. Cain's work testified what were his principles; and they were evil, for they were *his own*. Abel's works were righteous, for they were wrought of God. 1 John iii. 12; John iii. 20, 21; and vi. 28, 29; Heb. xi. 4. Abel relied upon the promise of God, and so "by faith offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."

The tower of Babel was a triangular concern, the result of the enterprize of the voluntary and utilitarian principles; "Let *us* make brick; and let *us* build *us* a city, and a tower; and let *us* make *us* a name," &c. Gen. xi. 3-5.

Ishmael was a "wild man" in a state of nature, untamed, unsubdued, unsanctified; he was upon the triangle; and therefore "his hand was against every man and every man's hand against him." Gen. xvi. 12. With him "a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush." He preferred an earthly estate in *possession*, to the *promise* of a heavenly inheritance, Gen. xxi. 9; Gal. iv. 29; he obtained, fortified and *possessed* for himself and posterity, towns, castles and principalities. Gen. xxv. 16. His heart and treasure were upon the earth. Luke xii. 19; Matt. vi. 19-21; Psalm xlix. 11; Gen. vi. 17; Luke xxii. 24-26.

Esau, like Ishmael, embarked in enterprises and achievements that ministered to his own lusts. He was a man of the world, and counted nothing profitable that did not minister to *his* gratification. He was a mere utilitarian; and his cardinal maxim, "What *profit* will it be to me?" Gen. xxv. 32; and so coming home from the chase half famished, the first food he sets his eyes on is the red pottage of Jacob,

and *that* he must instantly have ; nothing else will do ; he must and will have it ; and profanely renounces his birth-right for the meat ; Heb. xii. 15—17. As to the *promise*, said he, what profit will that be to a starving man ? can I live upon mere words ? Matt. iv. 4 ; upon breath ? You take the *promise* Jacob, and give me something solid and tangible to go upon ; give me something in *possession*, and you may have the *super-naturals*, the *spirituals*, the *promises*, the world to come ; I have my eyes opened, I know what red pottage is, that I understand—but the birth-right that you Jacob, and our good mother make such a fuss about, I acknowledge I hold it in cheap estimation, “ what *profit* will it be to *me* ? ” I cannot see, and I have seen too much of the world, not to “ look before I leap.” I must *feel* a foundation before I bear my weight upon it. At a later time when Esau observes the estimation in which Isaac held the *promise*, the *blessing*, he thinks it might be of more profit to him, somehow, than he had imagined, and is distressed that he had made a losing bargain. He was a man eminently of this world, and his treasures were here. He lived by the trophies of his sword, Gen. xxvii. 40 ; and his ultimate dependence, and chief ends, lay within the lines and entrenchments of his own personality ; and he obtained wealth, and children, and power, and kingdoms upon the earth. Gen. xxxvi.

The patriarchs and saints are not so. They looked for a heavenly city, (Heb. xi. 10, 16.) whose maker and builder was God. 2 Cor. v. 7 ; Rom. viii. 24, 25 ; 2 Cor. iv. 18 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 12. They have nothing of the promised inheritance in *possession*, Acts vii. 5. They are strangers and pilgrims on earth, Heb. xi. 13—17 ; Gen. xlvii. 9. Their treasure is the *promise* of God ; and not an earthly *possession*, Gen. xxviii. 20, 21 ; Isaiah xxxiii. 16 ; Matt. vi. 31—33. They “ looked not at the things which were seen and temporal ; but at the things which were unseen and eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 18.

The first knowledge of the counsel of redemption was communicated in the revelation of the decree that “ the seed of the *woman* should bruise the serpent’s head, Gen. iii. 15. Again to a *man*, to Abraham, and to *his* seed, were the *promises* made, Gal. iii. 16 ; and again, the *promise* is limited to Isaac and his seed, Gen. xxi. 12 ; Rom. ix. 7 ; Heb. xi. 18. And now *Rebecca*, the wife of Isaac, was with child

by him, and that in answer to prayer, Rom. xi. 10; Gen. xxv. 21; and doubtless, the confident expectation of the Church now was, that the set time to favor her had come; that the promised seed and the blessing were at hand. But now, to demonstrate that actions and works, by virtue of the universal and established laws of nature, have no agency, casually or synergistically, in procuring the blessing; that the "doings" of the Church have no part nor lot in this matter, while Rebecca was "enseint" with male twins, each bearing the same relation to the parents; and furthermore, to demonstrate that the works or doings of the issue themselves could have no possible influence in this respect, God did reveal, before the children were born, that their destiny respectively, and that of their posterity, was fixed according to his own sovereign will, Gen. xxv. 23; Rom. ix. 11, 12; and finally, the *reason* of this divine constitution is revealed to be, to remove all contingences and make the *promise sure to all the seed*. Rom. iv. 16. Here God is upon the throne of supreme dominion, and consequently every vestige of the human triangle is annihilated.

From the Exodus to the possession of Canaan, the land of *promise* was regarded by Israel as the great object of her enterprise and achievements; Psl. cv. 11. And we may notice the doctrines of the triangle, as the exhaustless source of her misery, rebellion, and abominable idolatry. It is when she is reposing upon herself, and not "leaning on the arm of her beloved" Cant. viii. 5, that the Church is in a state of apostacy. Exod. xxxii. 1—7. Hence she is in a panic, because her own arm is *not able* to cope with Egypt and so proves her unbelief and practical rejection of the Divine promise and power. Exod. xiv. 10—15. Modern Pelagians and Arminians argue if men are *not able to do* what is required to be done, we might as well preach to trees as to them; but is there no difference between a child of Abraham and a tree? and is there not power with God from stones to raise up children unto Abraham? Matt. iii. 9. Rom. iv. 16.

This same spirit of unbelief was with the Church in the wilderness. When the providence of God showed her, that her own resources were inadequate to a crisis, unbelief, (which is based upon the triangle,) dispairs. The stiff neck and stubborn way of Israel was triangular; she

would depend upon nothing but human ability, her own doings and natural power and resources, Judges. ii. 11—20 Psalm cvi. 29, 39. Hence their murmuring at Taberah, Massah, Meribah, and at Kibroth Hattaavah. A conviction of a state of supernatural dependence, distressed the people; they complained, cried out, and rebelled against God; and in despair of ever seeing the land of promise, declared their belief to be that with so precarious a dependence as the "word of God" Matt. iv. 4. the rock for water, 1 Cor. x. 4., and the "corn of heaven," Psalm lxxviii. 24, they could never live, but should die in the wilderness. They longed for the bread and water, the vegetables, fowl, fish, and meat on which they had always lived; they cried for their *natural* food, the sustenance of Egypt; they wept for something solid, palpable and substantial to go upon; a stock of provisions *in possession* after the manner of "all the nations." They rejected a dependence, spiritual, unseen, and eternal, and cried for "FLESH TO EAT," Num. xi. 1—7. Psalm 78; Num. xiv. chap. Deut. chapter i. and ii.; Psalm cvi; also 1 Cor. x. 1—15. an instinctive choice, to which there is no contrary in all the wonderful properties of the human triangle. We see Israel bemoaning herself with feminine weakness, at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, *in tears*, because her own power and valor are not equal to victory; and again, we see her falling before her enemies, because of her self confidence and vain glory. To despair or to boast is all the triangle can do, Num. xvi. 40—45. Num. xi. 1—7; Num. chapt. xiii. and xiv.; Deut. ix. 4—27; Heb. iii. 16—19; Psalm cvi. 7—46; also lxxviii. Psalm.

From the Exodus to the time of Samuel the prophet, the acknowledged government of Israel was a theocracy. The symbols of his presence were in the midst of the people of God, to whom he revealed his will and manifested his power by prophets, teachers, and judges, whom he raised up from time to time for his own glory. During all this period, the essence of apostacy in the Church consisted in a renunciation of the supreme dominion of God, a practical denial of his truth, and unbelief in his power, a contempt of his grace, a departing from his ways; in short, a rejection of his *covenant*, and in a decided and fatal preference of her will, her own ways, and her own inventions. This spirit finally manifested itself politically, by a formal rejection on the part of the people of the royal authority of God. They

chose them a king "after the manner of nations." 1 Saml. viii. 5—22; Acts xiii. 21. Upon the removal of Saul, God raised up *David* to be king of Israel, and the *covenant blessing* was renewed in the form of a *promise* of a glorious and everlasting *kingdom* in his family, 2 Saml. vii. 12—18; Acts xiii. 22—24; Rom. i. 1—4. From this epoch the Church appear to have laboured to realise the blessing of a universal subjection, of all the kingdoms of the earth to the son of David. The splendid reign of Solomon, seemed only an earnest of the future glory of Israel.

But how soon are ten of the tribes upon the triangle, discovering their regard for their own interests and prosperity, to be supreme, and their devotion to the son of David to be but quite a subordinate concern. They attempt to negotiate a treaty, to drive a bargain upon the principle of the "rational and passionate estimates," after the "manner of all the nations," and not succeeding according to their will, they raise the standard of revolt under Jeroboam the son of Nebot, and inscribe a motto of independence and defiance upon their banner, "What portion have we in David, and we have none inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to your tents, O Israel; and now, David, see to thine own house." 2 Cron. x. 16, 19. From this date we read of the wars, offensive, and defensive; of the sins, apostacies, idolatries, and abominations of these people in the chronicles of Israel and Judah, and in the writings of the prophets. The Lord finally removes Israel to Assyria; but restores Judah from the captivity of Babylon, and reestablishes the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the Jews, under Ezra and Nehemiah. After Malachi shuts the book, we read in history that Judea (except under the Maccabee princes) was dependent and tributary to Persia, to Alexander, Egypt, Syria, and finally to imperial Rome, during all which time, God protected his people in the enjoyment of a good degree of their civil and ecclesiastical institutions. From the time of David, the Jews were "waiting" for *his Son*, the great body of the people only expecting a temporal deliverer who should restore the kingdom to Israel, or achieve by his conquests, a universal empire; for so did they "understand the voices of the prophets which were read in their synagogues every Sabbath day." Acts xiii. 27. Thus because they *understood not* the nature of the dynasty, or the character of the king *promised*, they were subject to perpetual impositions when-

ever the cry was raised, "Lo ! here is Christ ; or, lo ! there;" and supported by plausible pretensions, by signs, prodigies, and wonders ; success in arms, or a multitude of followers ; and it is against this very danger that our Lord warned his disciples. Matt. xxiv. 23—26 ; Mark xiii. 21—24.

From the time of Abraham to Christ, the sacred writers record the *wickedness* of the Church : we find little of their "good doings," but of their unbelief, rebellion, apostacies, idolatries ; and not only of their *impiety*, but as a consequence, also of their shocking immorality and monstrous violations of every precept in the second table of the law. We have glanced at these things before the Kings, and from that time hear the prophets. And as a specimen,

| ISAIAH. | JEREMIAH. | EZEKIEL. |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| i. chapter, | i. 16 ; | v. 5—12 ; |
| ii. 6—10 ; | ii. 5—10 ; | viii. chapter ; |
| iii. 8—19 ; | chapters iii. and iv. | xvi. 44—60. |

And the other prophets to the same point.

The exceeding wickedness of the Church exhibits in a wonderful light the unspeakable forbearance, long suffering and goodness of God, and his infallible fidelity.

On examination, the principles of the triangle will be seen to be at the foundation of "the fall of Israel." They trusted and rejoiced in their own hearts, minds, sufficiency, philosophy, and inventions ; and so worshipped the "*WORKS OF THEIR OWN HANDS.*" God called them to be a *peculiar people* ; and though in a sense, they gloried in being a chosen people, their spirits were too liberal, their sentiments too charitable, to arrogate pretensions so exclusive, bigoted, and sectarian, that they should not mingle with the heathen, and tolerate, and even love their ways and their gods. So in the matter of the Canaanites, there was so much benevolence, or sympathy, or something else, which *governed* Israel, that she did not execute the judgment and precept of her God, but disobeyed Him, that she might walk in her own ways. Psalm cvi. 35—40 ; Judges i. 21, 27—36 ; Deut. vii. 2, 16—26 ; Judges ii. 2—14. And so in her relations, offensive and defensive with the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, Ethiopians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egypt, etc. her besetting and perpetual sin was *self dependence* ; a resort to, and reliance upon *natural* principles, resources and power ; upon what was common to her and "all the nations," *HUMAN ABILITY*. Trusting to numbers, valor, and tactics ; to

the arts of diplomacy, *to policy, intrigue, and lying*, to treaties with other nations, looking to Egypt and Assyria for help, and renouncing the strength of Israel, *the truth, and the grace, and the power of her covenant God.*

We must not imagine, because Scripture does not like Popery, ancient and modern, canonise the saints and record the wonderful works of men, and glory in the statistics of human achievement in "doing good," that therefore the Lord had not at all times, his chosen ones. Though the will of man, under the influence of a mere moral suasion of objective motives, has always rejected the covenant, and certainly preferred the triangular dependence, yet, there was always a remnant "according to God's election of grace," who have waited for the *promise* of mercy, for the consolation of Israel, and for the kingdom of God. Luke ii. 25; Isaiah i. 9; Rom. xi. 1—6; Isaiah x. 22; Matt. xv. 43. But as the kingdom of God cometh not with observation, Luke xvii. 20, so his subjects are not ordinarily a bustling or a very notorious people; hence they are called "hidden ones," Psalm lxxxiii. 3; Col. iii. 3, and of the seven thousand whom he had reserved to himself in the days of Elijah, not one it seems, had done enough to make himself manifest to the prophet, and nothing is recorded of the great things which they did; but the negative fact, that they had "*not bowed the knee to Baal, nor kissed him.*" Rom. xi. 3—6; 1 Kings xix. 10—19. The eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, teaches that the annals of the faithful tell mostly of their *sufferings*, of the goodness of God to them, and of his wonderful works in them, and by them.

In our times and country, we would imagine great improvements, or great defects in the Church, for little is heard of the goodness, grace, long suffering and forbearance of God toward her. There would seem to be but little room for the exercise even of Divine mercy; for the Church behaves so well and has made such improvements in principle, and has achieved so much in glorious results, that she seems rather in the attitude of a *patron* of the Divine system, a *royal ally*, who is aiding the King of kings by her subsidies and her men in subduing his enemies, and extending the lines and dominions of his kingdom, and by no means herself a *subject*, or in any sense hostile to his principles or supremacy. Whatever may be inconsiderately said of the Jewish Church, few would avow in terms that christians

now are more spiritual, holy, or devoted, than those gathered into the Church by Christ and his apostles. But we do not find them eulogising each other, or the churches for their *great and wonderful works*. They are sometimes commended for *THEIR FAITH and DOCTRINE*; but now *doctrine* is repudiated and "doing good," and especially in some new and effectual way, is the only thing that is tolerated. Do they call upon their inventions to which they offer incense? Jerem. xi. 12. Do they in fact sacrifice to the "net that catches," and the "drag that gathers them in?" Habk. i. 15, 16. Was there ever such an incomparable Church since the world began, as the present republican and American Church? We hear nothing of her sins, or the sins of her people; the heart is all right, and all she wants is work and increase of money and of men! The apostles of Jesus were sinful men; and they record the sins of each other and of the churches; the disputes among the disciples who should be the greatest; their unbelief, their desertion and denial of Christ, their indwelling sin. Romans chap. vii. The churches are reprov'd for their immoralities and heresies; we read of the sins of Ananias and Saphira; of the murmurings of the Grecians and Hebrews; of the controversies about the doctrine of Moses at Antioch, Acts xv.; of the wrangling and contentions of the Corinthians about their ministers, of their litigious and fraudulent propensities. 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8; of their disorderly proceedings; 1 Cor. xiv. 23; of their disgraceful and beastly practices; 1 Cor. xi. 21; of their bitterness, strife, and divisions; James iii. xiv.; Gall. v. 15; of the miserable work of the heretical teachers; 1 Cor. iii. 10—15; of the calumnies of their tongues, and of their mean and lazy propensities; 2 Thes. iii. 10, 11; of their vile sensualities, and even of the enmity of some *within the pale* to the cross of Christ; Phil. iii. 18, 19. Paul expected no perfection among the brethren at Corinth; 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21; and whatever of good is in the Church is ascribed to the leaven of the doctrine of Christ; 2 Cor. ii.—vi. 1 *Jud.* iii. 9; 2 *Jud.* vi. 9; Acts ii. 42; Rom. vi. 17, 18.

Is the kingdom of God located in *this world*? and does it concern mainly things *seen and temporal*? Is the perfection of man, morally, socially, intellectually, politically, the object, scope, and end, of the gospel of the Son of God? Is it to ameliorate the condition, to enlighten the minds, to

cultivate the sentiments, and to civilize the barbarism of the heathen, that Jesus shed his blood? Is this the good to be effected? The evils to be remedied, then, are not *SIN*, but some of its temporal effects, ignorance, immoralities, drunkenness, poverty, sickness, etc. and if these are the evils, then the *good to be done* is to disseminate a knowledge of letters, polite literature, and the science of morals; to promote temperance, relieve the poor and the sick, etc., and the best people are those who give the most money to build poor houses, hospitals, infirmaries, monasteries, nunneries, etc., and we are animated by the very soul of popery!

But to return; at the time of the Christian era, the Jews were confidently looking for their Messiah, the son of David; but the general expectation was of a deliverer from the Roman yoke, and not from the bondage and dominion of sin and satan, Acts xiii. 22, 23; Luke ii. 25; Matt. ii. 2; and although John the Baptist preached not the kingdom of *Judah*, but the kingdom of Heaven, and Jesus preached the kingdom of God, Mark i. 14; yet so slow of heart were men to believe and understand, that even after his resurrection, his own disciples asked him if he would *then* restore the kingdom to *Israel*! Acts i. 6. The New Testament is a divine revelation of the true principles, character, and constitution of *the kingdom of God*; a solution of the great mystery of godliness, Col. i. 26—29; Eph. iii. 9, 10; a *testimony* concerning the *seed of the woman*, Gen. iii. 15; 1 John iii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 25; concerning the *seed of Abraham*, Gal. iii. 16; and the nature of the *promised inheritance*, Col. i. 12; Heb. ix. 15; 1 Peter i. 5; Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. vi. 23; Gal. iv. 7; Titus i. 2; concerning the *son of David* and the Son of God, Luke i. 32; 2 Sam. vii. 12—18; Rom. i. 1—4; Acts xiii. 22—24. From which we learn that all the *promises*, from the beginning of the world, have respect to Christ and their fulfilment in him, 2 Cor. i. 20. That *He* is the *seed*, the *inheritance*, the *King*, the *blessing*, the unspeakable gift; and that in Him only can sinners be blessed with reconciliation to God and eternal life, John x. 28; and xvii. 2, 3; Rom. v. 21; 1 John i. 2; Tit. iii. 7; 1 John ii. 25; Jude 21; 1 John v. 11, 20. We see therefore Jesus Christ to be the focal point, to whom all the rays of light and life converge, which are reflected from Moses, the prophets and the Psalms, John v. 46; Luke xxiv. 24.

When He came he taught the nature of the *BLESSING*;

and to this end he taught the import of the *wrath* and *curse* of God upon the human race *as sinners*; John xvii. 2, 6, 9, 12, 14, 20, 21, 25, 26; Luke xiii. 23—30; Matt. xiii. 37—44; John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8; Matt. xxv. 31—46; Luke xvi. 19—31; John viii. 21—24; Matt. x. 28, 33—xvi. 25, 26—xxiii. 13—15, 33; Mark viii. 38—ix. 43—49—xvi. 15, 16; Luke xiii. 3—xiv. 27; John v. 28, 29—xv. 6; of the *great damnation* and of the *great salvation*, and so his forerunner, Matt. iii. 7—13; and so his apostles, 1 Peter iii. 19—20—iv. 17, 18; 2 Peter ii. 1, 3—5, 9, 12, 17—iii.; Rom. ii. 3—11—ix. 20—24; 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16—v. 10, 11; Phil. iii. 18, 19; 2 Thes. i. 6—10; Col. iii. 6; Heb. x. 26—31. It was the *truth* in relation to unseen but eternal realities; it was the *doctrine* of Christ which He and his apostles preached as the only key to the kingdom of heaven, John x. 9—iii. 36—vi. 47; Mark xvi. 16—i. 14; Matt. iv. 23; John vi. 63, 68—xvii. 8; Acts v. 20—xi. 14. The only door of hope and life, Matt. x. 9; John xiv. 6; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Heb. ii. 17.

The peculiar blessedness of the Christian dispensation is, that by it life and immortality are brought to light, 2 Tim. i. 10; Titus i. 2, 3; Col. i. 26; Matt. xiii. 11. We find that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, joy, power, Rom. xiv. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 20; 1 Thes. i. 5. This kingdom is not an empire established on a system of constitutional sympathies, moral suasion, natural susceptibilities, mental pathology or intellectual dynamics, nor upon results of any human estimates, rational or passionate, as the above scriptures prove, and Jesus will reign a king till he subdues all the enemies of his kingdom and people, the devil, the world, the flesh, sin and hell, Psalm cx. 1; Acts ii. 36; Heb. x. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 25; to God alone, therefore, belongs the *kingdom*, the *power*, and the *glory*. The *doctrine* of Jesus and his apostles in respect to the redemption and the Redeemer, and especially of his royal, prophetic and priestly offices, is the very Gospel itself, and blot out what is written in the Old and New Testament of the *doctrine* of Christ, and nothing is left but darkness, and death, and consuming fire, 2 Cor. iv. 6; John i. 9; Heb. xii. 29; John iii. 36—viii. 12. The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus, Rev. xix. 10; Luke xxiv. 27—xviii. 31; Acts xiii. 29; 1 Cor. ii. 2. The distinctive mark of the true disciple is an ear to hear, a heart to love, and a will to obey the *doctrine* or the *words* of Christ, John x. 3—5, 14, 26, 27—xvii. 8; 2 John ix. This

doctrine is the means of all godliness, Isaiah liii. 11 ; 2 Peter i. 3 ; it has been received from the beginning of the world ; God has been honored and glorified, and men have been humbled, abased and blessed, for the light of the saint so shines before men that they seeing his good works, glorify *his Father* who is in heaven, Matt. v. 16 ; and where the true *doctrine* of the kingdom of grace has been rejected and despised, men have been left to judicial blindness, reprobacy and unbelief, and to embrace the *doctrines* of devils, 2 Thes. ii. 10-13. Satan is the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2 ; 2 Cor. iv. 4 ; Rev. xii. 9.

Jesus went about every where teaching the *doctrine* of his kingdom, concerning which men always have, naturally, amazingly false and fatal conceptions ; and it was the great work of his apostles, and the leading object of the ministerial institution, to preach the *doctrine* of the kingdom of God. Notice in the following Scriptures the testimony of Christ and his apostles concerning THE KINGDOM, Matt. iv. 23 ; vi. 10, 33 ; Mark xi. 10—iv. 11 ; Luke viii. 1—xii. 32 ; John iii. 3, 5—xviii. 36 ; Acts i. 3—xix. 8—xiv. 22. Read also the following testimonies as to the KING himself, John i. 49, 50 ; Rom. x. 8, 9 ; Luke xvi. 16—xxiv. 47 ; 1 Cor. i. 23 ; 2 Cor. iv. 5 ; Galatians i. 16 ; Acts xi. 20—x. 36. And in an age of general apostacy from the faith once delivered to the saints, when men will not endure sound doctrine, 2 Tim. iv. 3, and the *doctrine* of the kingdom of God is a topic of contempt and scorn to the wise and the scribe, and is the “song of the fool and the drunkard,” at such a time we refer the serious reader to the following Scriptures as a testimony of the mind of Christ, as to the danger of *false doctrine*, Matt. vii. 15—xxiv. 4, 5, 11—xviii. 7 ; Mark xiii. 22, 23 ; Eph. v. 6—iv. 14 ; Luke xvii. 1 ; 2 Cor. xi. 5, 13, 15 ; Col. ii. 4, 8, 18 ; 1 John iv. 1—ii. 18 ; 2 John 7—12 ; 1 Tim. iv. 1—vi. 3 ; 2 Tim. iii. 18 ; Jude 18 ; 1 Cor. xi. 19 ; 2 Peter iii. 17 ; 2 Thes. ii. 3 ; Eph. iv. 14 ; Heb. xiii. 9 ; Gal. i. 1-10 ; Rev. ii. 15. We see it was not only the great work of Jesus and his apostles to preach the *doctrine* of the kingdom, but also to warn the Churches of damnable heresies and doctrines of devils. But with some in this enlightened age, the very word *doctrine* is met with a sneer—there is “*no difference*”—we are all orthodox, and the philosophy of explanation is an art of the modern magicians

of Egypt, who by their enchantments can fuse into one homogeneous mass the most discordant and heterogeneous materials.

The primitive Church directed her labors to the preaching of the *doctrine* of Christ among the nations; which *doctrine* has always been opposed not only by the openly profane, but most bitterly by the chief priests of Judaism and Paganism, the Pharisees and Saducees from the time of Caiaphas and Herod even unto this day, Math. xxvi. 3, 4; Mark iii. 6; John vii. 7.

Previous to the time of Constantine, the Christian religion had spread over most of the provinces of the Eastern Empire and also to the North and West. Among idolaters and polytheists, it might have enjoyed the general toleration. But as they "could not drink of the cup of Christ and the cup of devils," 1 Cor. x. 21, Christians testified against all other religions as sinful and abominable.

It was this want of charity, this exclusiveness, this sectarianism that was one cause of provoking the oppositions, persecutions and deaths which they were called and blessed to endure, Matt. v. 44; Acts v. 41.

Constantine consolidated the Church and united it to the state, and henceforth she becomes prominent on the theatre of *action* as a power of this world, and her leading object is seen to be to *proselyte all nations*. The power of money, of superstition, of the sword, the combination of all natural power and influence moral, intellectual, spiritual and physical, when within her grasp, has been made tributary to the ambition of the Church for universal empire. This was felt to be the object of her Divine institution, and to this end all her energies have been directed. So powerful was this sentiment, that it became a general principle of belief and action among Christian nations, "that it was not only a right but a duty, to reduce to obedience for the sake of conversion, every people who were not Christians. To make war upon infidels, was for many years, a conspicuous part of European public law;" and these sentiments prevailed, not only among the ignorant, superstitious and fanatic, but exerted their influence over such men as Grotius, Lord Coke and Lord Bacon. Kent Com. i. 10, 11.

The labor of the Church has not been directed alone to the extension of her empire without, but also to increase the power and practise of religion within her pale. At one

time asceticism is the order of the day, and under the operation of the "voluntary principle" those who aimed at special sanctity, have been directed to celibacy, fastings, prayers, charities and special efforts of self-denial in "doing good;" while others were sent with the recluses and anchorites into the caves and dens of the wilderness, among the wild beasts, Mark i. 13, and taught to abandon their earthly possessions to the Church for pious uses; to renounce the world and its affairs; to shun association and contact with man, as a moral contamination, and to overcome the carnal mind by abjuring flesh and wine and all pleasant food, and subsisting upon roots and water; and this was at one time the form of ministration, by the Church, of life and sanctification to the soul by the mortification, starvation and nakedness of the body. At another time all virtue and good works consist in extensive and most laborious, costly and painful pilgrimages; and then again penitential tears, with works of suffering penance, wash away sin; and the voluntary principle is in active and efficient exercise in inventions of austerities and torments the most severe and excruciating that the wretched devotee might be made partaker of the sufferings of Christ. Again; the establishment of benevolent institutions becomes the queen of Heaven, Jer. xlv. 17—20, and the "voluntary principle" and the "new philosophy," (as it was called) were eagerly adopted by a crowd of proselytes. The old castles, bulwarks and strong holds of feudal and ruffian times are associated with monasteries and nunneries: there is the visor and the sword; here the cowl and the veil; there revelry, dancing, the song profane and evil works; here are moanings, and prayers, and vigils, and matins, and fastings, and prodigies "doing good." These benevolent institutions of the day afforded an asylum for all who were sick of the world and a cold and formal religion, and whose zeal would be satisfied with nothing short of an abandonment of the world and an exclusive devotion to God.

Again, societies are the idols of the day, and the "voluntary principle" promises, by special efforts, and the honor of felicitous combinations, to achieve the most glorious results. And so societies, and orders, military, mendicant, benevolent, reformatory and others spring up, which are devoted, organised, drilled and appointed, to some special effort of "doing good." There are knights, teutonic and

templars and of the hospital ; there are friars and monks, Benedictine, Franciscan, Dominican and others. The "voluntary principle" was too gallant and popular to overlook the *ladies* ; and so they had also their societies and benevolent institutions ; there were the Ursulines, the nuns of St. Benedict, of the Hospital, of St. Dominic, the Sisters of Charity and others. Special efforts, societies and orders, succeeding one another as corruption or reform within or without required and demanded.

The Church with maternal tenderness and liberality, unwilling needlessly to wound the feelings, or offend the prejudices of Jew or Gentile adopted into her worship some of the unessential ceremonies, and mysteries of the Jewish and Pagan religions, and exhausted the powers of man to have her ceremonials imposing, solemn, affecting and awful. All that genius and skill could effect by the arts of painting, sculpture and music, were seen and heard within the Christian temples ; where also superstition with her infernal spells, enchantments and charms was working miracles in conversion and sanctification, with her pictures, statues, relics and bones.

The Church not only held the keys of the inquisition and of purgatory, but was the sole depository of those of the kingdom of heaven. Her clergy must be wholly devoted, soul and body to her service, and therefore no alliance or obligation, matrimonial or civil is tolerated that would interfere with this exclusive devotion to religion. The power of money has never been overlooked by the Church, and at one time a large part of all the treasures of Europe were at her feet. The sole interpreter of Scripture, the truth can only be heard from her mouth, and the written word is no better than a snare for souls, without her oracular and infallible interpretation. Her power in the sacraments is not only efficacious to communicate or withhold grace, but her indulgence is plenary, and her absolution sealed in Heaven. With these organizations and elements of power of "doing good," what has the Romish Church *by these means effected* for the kingdom of Jesus ? True she has planted the banner of the cross at her missionary stations among every tongue, and nation, and people ; but her conquests are for herself, and her kingdom is located in this world. Her influence has been extended for centuries in favour of learning, morality and civilization. She sends men and money to

every creature ; but where we ask, *where* is the *gospel* of Jesus ; *where* is the *doctrine* of Christ ? *where* ?

And now who does not see that this whole array of means, measures, machinery, and conquests is the result of *unbelief* and a renunciation of the *doctrine* of the kingdom, that it is the working of *anti* Christ ? 2 Thes. ii. 3—13. The natural effect of the "voluntary principle" and *the triangle of humanity*. This history is not of a struggle between the "flesh and the spirit," but flesh and flesh, Church power and state power. Episcopal and papal warfares, the quarrels of the popedom and the Empire, among the rivals for the *See*, between the ecclesiastical and civil authorities ; a history of the bulls and interdicts of Popes and of the resistance or submission of kings.

Nor let it be supposed that this spirit of anti-Christ is confined to Roman Popery, the same *spirit* works and always has in every visible Church ; though in the Roman it has been more *manifested* and *revealed*. 2 Thes. ii. 8. Look at the history of the Protestants on the continent ; of Presbyterianism in Scotland ; of Episcopacy in England and Scotland under James and the Charleses ; of Congregationalism under Cromwell. See the dissenters fleeing themselves from religious persecution, and ask the Quaker and the Baptist how they fare under puritanical domination. It signifies nothing to say that the power of the Church has among Protestants been exerted in favor of *civil liberty* ; sometimes it has, sometimes not ; but the *principle* is wrong. The rule that justifies the puritans in their political compact to sustain Cromwell, the commonwealth and independency will sanction the conduct of the Catholics of Ireland. The *kingdom of Jesus* is not of this world, and when the spirit of this world, and the principles of the human triangle reign in the Church, we have nothing *fundamentally* better at work than the patriotism of Cataline and the religion of the Pontifex Maximus. When the Church is upon this basis, she has "no king but Cæsar."

We deem it wholly superfluous to attempt a description of the doings and glorious results of the American Church. Her zeal in giving them notoriety has not been surpassed by her zeal for any thing else. We need not therefore discourse of her new discoveries, her new philosophy of explanations and of nullifications, her new combinations and institutions, of the omnipotence of her numerous abstractions

and of her extreme and self denying devotion in "doing good," of her temperance principle, submission principle, olition principle, pacific principle, fulminating principle, financial principle; and other voluntary principles.

From our sketch of the history of triangular principles in the Church, we have seen her sin in all times of apostacy to be that of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, to maintain her own independence, sovereignty and dominion; she corrupts the true worship, she rejects the temple, and order, and word of God as her only infallable rule of faith and practice, to make way for her own idols and devices; she removes the priests and Levites, (those whom God alone calls to his service,) and raises up priests of the lowest of the people, who will serve her in all her abominations. 1 Kings xii. 25—33. The chief priests, pharisees, and rulers of the people always reason thus, "If we let *Him* alone the Romans shall come and take away both *our* place and nation," Jer. xi. 47, 48. *Our* offices, *our* influence, *our* preferments, and *our* authority.

(To be continued.)

ART. III.—SLAVERY AND ABOLITIONISM.

No. I.

It was not at first, and is not now the object of this excitement to establish any principle in relation to the subject of slavery: for on that subject, there was essentially but one opinion. This the abolition publications abundantly show, not only by the records they furnish of the views of the most enlightened and influential individuals of the past and present age, but by the drift and purport of their contents generally. The only question about which any material difference of opinion was, "How shall the evil of slavery be removed?" This question involved and still involves a variety of considerations, moral, political, civil and social; and it is no further settled nor any nearer being settled in the minds of intelligent, sober and conscientious men, than it was several years ago. The abolitionists indeed, regardless of these considerations, dictate a summary and exclusive mode of disposing of the subject; and not only denounce

and condemn all who do not adopt their doctrine, but threaten to give it speedy and triumphant effect by subverting or revolutionizing the governments both of church and state, by the power of the press, of agitation, of the ballot box, and of something further if necessary.

Their real object, under color of sympathy for the slaves in the Southern States, is to gratify their own fanatical propensities, and to kindle a flame of passion at the north, out of which their audacious selfishness and ambition may be supported, and their power rendered conspicuous and formidable by the control of associated followers, voters, and peradventure, in the end, fighters.

Any one at all conversant with their publications, must be sufficiently aware that the whole scope of their proceedings is fanatical and insurrectionary. Witness their incessant appeals to the worst passions of the excitable, the restless, the ignorant, deluded and reckless portions of the community; their bold and unscrupulous denunciation and ridicule of civil and ecclesiastical rulers, politicians, literary and professional men, and of all classes and descriptions of men who stand aloof from their headlong course, and favor any other scheme but theirs; and their incendiary attempts to excite the feelings and mould the sentiments of their followers in opposition to the authority of every kind of government, and of those sacred and social institutions by which licentiousness and depravity are restrained. Witness the whole aspect of their undertaking and proceedings; the demand of individuals at the north upon the government and people of the South, of instant and unconditional emancipation upon pain of whatever consequences may follow the enforcement of such demand; their disgusting egotism and odious adulation of each other; their boasts of persecution and martyrdom; and their blustering claims of an onward progress—namely a progress in deluding the imaginations, exciting the passions, and collecting the money of new recruits. Witness their disagreements, suspicions and denunciations of each other; their opposing creeds, their rival prints, their quarrels, in short, about the loaves and fishes, and the honors and powers to be enjoyed in the scramble and tumult of their crusade.

What have they accomplished better or different from the things indicated above? And pursuing the same course, what else is it, in the nature of things, possible for them to

accomplish? When they commenced their efforts, a movement was in progress in Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky similar to that by which slavery had been abolished in the Eastern and middle States. That movement was arrested by their exciting and violent proceedings. Have they benefitted the condition or prospects of the slaves in these states or elsewhere? Is it possible to account for their proceedings except on grounds above referred to? Does any rational man deem their scheme practicable after what they have done, and under their system of measures, without such revolution and violence as will destroy both white and blacks.

We said that the abolitionists had neither established nor attempted to establish any new political principle with regard to the nature or effects of slavery. On the contrary, they have been most industrious in circulating the opinions of distinguished divines and statesmen, both at the north and south who had given one concurrent sentiment on the subject before abolitionism commenced. Indeed we believe that there was entire unanimity on this subject at the north ten years ago, and at the south the difference was more as to the means or practicability of removing the evil than any doubt as to its nature. The present generation found slavery existing in its strength, interwoven with their forms of government, so intimately connected with all their social relations, that any sudden removal of it would have been impossible or fatal. Immediate emancipation like that which England had effected in her colonies, was out of the question. The states governments whose jurisdiction alone extended to this subject, even could they have construed their powers in such a manner as to require of their citizens the relinquishment of such an amount of property, had like England no equivalent to bestow in return. But at the south no man contended that it was right to introduce slavery to any country on any pretext whatever, much less that it was right to reduce a fellow being to a state of servitude. On the contrary, although their fortunes and political influence in the union depended to so great an extent on the existence of slavery, several of the southern states were preparing to take the same stand with New England and the middle states, though at a far greater sacrifice. Virginia was just on the eve of passing a bill which provided for gradual emancipation of her slaves. Other southern gov-

ernments would soon have modelled their institutions according to their views of political justice.

Politicians and philanthropists were becoming of one opinion as to the importance of removing slavery; the only question was, how shall it be effected. Immediate emancipation was out of the question as it was beyond the powers both of the states and the general government. Besides a great and radical change of sentiments as to its safety, must have preceded and prepared the way for it. The only question was what scheme of gradual emancipation was most promising, and the question was awakening no small interest at the south.

But just at this crisis abolitionism makes its appearance. Societies and combinations are formed in the middle and northern states to affect the legislation and change the political institutions of neighboring states.

We contend for the full liberty of the press, but where societies and combinations with immense funds, numerous agents, and extensive power over the press are formed for the express purpose of affecting legislation and changing the framework of government by ceaseless agitation, we believe that they are wholly of an insurrectionary character and inconsistent with the peace, stability, or even durability of government. This has been evinced to some extent in England and on a pretty large scale in this country. Abolitionism instantly paralysed the efforts of southern philanthropists and legislators in behalf of the slaves. But did it succeed? Far from it. It was soon found that the mere question of immediate emancipation as compared with gradual where it gained a hearing, did not excite much interest, and something exciting was required to direct attention to it. It was found necessary to assert an authority over the conscience where the Bible had left it free, and immediately the relation of master and slave was pronounced to be sinful, and its continuance under whatever circumstances was placed on the same footing as the continued cohabitation of parties living in an adulterous intercourse and an immediate separation was urged upon the same principle.

This assumption of the sinfulness of the relation has served its turn, it has been the ground not for kind addresses to the conscience of the slaveholder, but for applying to him the most insulting and opprobrious epithets, for exciting against him the worst passions of the worst part of the

community. He has been assailed wholly with ridicule contempt and abuse. As if a dozen republics could be awed into submission by an artificial storm of wrath excited and kept up by a few individuals at the north.

It is odds but that a great society possessed of great funds, though clothed with the most extensive powers, will find them too small to compass the high ends at which it will soon venture to aim. The temperance society had well nigh pronounced the observance of the sacrament of the supper itself as Christ instituted it an act of sin; a very large portion of the members consider it so. They ventured to interdict the use of wine with as stern an authority as Mahomet himself. Now it is this attempt at domination over the conscience where the Bible has left it free that we shall attempt to oppose. We think that the volume of inspiration is a book pure enough for any man that is at all reasonable in his demands; and should it be thought to come short we still object to any combination of men however philanthropic, in their attempt to supply the deficiency. We believe that the Bible alone should bind the conscience. We grant that in thousands of cases, individuals may see their situation and circumstances to be such as to justify and require an immediate emancipation of their slaves, and render it highly sinful in them to fail to do it; yet we contend that it is an affair altogether between God and their own consciences. No society, no church has a right to interfere. We shall attempt to prove that the Bible does not pronounce the relation itself to be sinful, that it leaves it to the conscience of the Christian to interpret the great law of love, and the state to consult a wise, benevolent and just policy, as to the time and manner of emancipation.

No. II.

There are some things in the present aspect of the great political and heretical excitement of the day touching the subject of Slavery, which indicate a waning tendency in respect to the public mind, while the violence of the mania in the ring-leaders is increasing and rapidly verging to the last extremes. Under these circumstances the true character of the whole affair may be easily discerned, and it may be useful to sound Christian and rational men to present a

brief Scriptural view of the main questions which concern the relations and duties of slaves and their masters.

We therefore proceed at once to quote several passages of Scripture, from the critical version of Macknight, and to subjoin the remarks which they naturally suggest.

"Let every one remain in the same calling in which he was called. Wast thou called being a bondman? * Be not thou careful to be made free. Yet if thou canst even be made free, rather use it. For the bondman who is called by the Lord, is the Lord's freed man. In like manner also, a freeman who is called is Christ's bondman. Ye were bought with a price; become not the slaves of men. Brethren in what state each one was called, in that let him remain with God." 1 Cor. vii. 20—24.

"Servants obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the integrity of your heart, as to Christ. Not with eye service as men pleasers, but as servants of Christ do the will of God from the soul; with good will, acting as servants to the Lord, and not to men only. Knowing that whatever good work any one doth, for that he shall receive of the Lord, whether he be a slave or a free man. And masters, do the same things to them, moderating threatening, knowing that the master even of you yourselves is in heaven, and respect of persons is not with him." Eph. vi. 5—9.

"Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service, as men pleasers, but with integrity of heart, as fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, work it from the soul, as working to the Lord, and not to men only; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense, for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he who doth unjustly, shall receive for the injustice he hath done; For there is no respect of persons. Masters afford to your servants what is just and what is equal, knowing that ye also have a master in the heavens." Col. iii. 22—25—iv. 1.

"Let whatever servants are under the yoke, esteem their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and the doctrine of the Gospel be not evil spoken of. And they who have believing masters, let them not despise them be-

* In the times of the Apostle slavery extended through the Civilized world, and the term *doulos* was that which was universally applied to the bondman. The term *servant* does not now express the full meaning of *doulos*, which is used in all the passages cited. The careful English reader would gather this meaning from the context without recurring to his Commentary.

cause they are brethren ; but let them serve them more, because they are believers and beloved who receive the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any one teach differently, and consent not to the wholesome commandments which are our Lord Jesus Christ's, and to the doctrine according to godliness, he is puffed up with pride, knowing nothing ; but is distempered about questions and debates of words, whereof come envy, strife, evil speakings, unjust suspicions, perverse disputings of men wholly corrupted in mind and destitute of the truth, who reckon gain to be religion : from such withdraw thyself." 1 Tim. vi. 1—5.

"Servants exhort to be subject to their own masters, and in all things to be careful to please, not answering again, not secretly stealing, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Titus ii. 9—10.

"Household servants, be subject to your lords with all reverence, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward ; for this is an acceptable thing, if any one from conscience of God's commands, sustains sorrows, suffering unjustly." 1 Peter ii. 18, 19.

"Him," Onesimus, "I have sent back." Philemon 12.

1. The Gospel does not abrogate the political relations or obligations of men.

Let every soul be subject to the higher powers ; that is, to the authority of government, whether of parents, masters or magistrates. Be subject not only on account of wrath, but also on account of conscience. Render therefore to all their dues. In what state each one was called, in that let him remain with God.

"In the first age," says Macknight respecting 1 Cor. vii. 17—24, "some of the brethren entertaining wrong notions of the privileges conferred on them by the Gospel, fancied that, on their becoming Christians, they were freed from their former political as well as religious obligations. To remove that error the apostle ordered every Christian to continue in the state in which he was called to believe ; because the Gospel sets no person free from any innocent political, and far less from any natural obligation. The converted Jew was still to remain under the law of Moses as the municipal law of Judea, and the converted Gentile was not to become a Jew by receiving circumcision. Because in the affair of men's salvation no regard is had either to circumcision or uncircumcision, but to the keeping of

the commandments of God. Every one therefore after his conversion was to remain in the political state in which he was converted. In particular, slaves after their conversion were to continue under the power of their masters as before, unless they could lawfully obtain their freedom, and a free-man was not to make himself a slave. The reason was because having been bought by Christ with a price, if he became the slave of men, he might find it difficult to serve Christ, his superior master. And therefore the Apostle a third time enjoined them to remain in the condition wherein they were called."

So Doddridge on the same passage: "Since the providence of God is concerned in all these relations, and in the steps by which they were contracted, as God hath distributed to every one, and, as it were, cast the parts of life, let every one so walk, even as the Lord hath called him. This I command in all the Churches, and charge it upon the consciences of men, as a lesson of the highest importance." "I may apply this not only to the different employments, but relations in life."

2. When men are converted they are required to be obedient and faithful in the circumstances in which, by the arrangements of Divine providence, they are placed. It is in these circumstances that they are to exercise the Christian graces and to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them to glory and virtue.

3. Slaves when converted are bound to honor their masters and to serve them with fidelity, whether they be good and gentle or froward. They are required to do this as a part of their obedience to God. They are to do it for conscience sake, in the integrity of their hearts as to Christ, that they may honor the name and adore the doctrine of God our Saviour.

4. Converted slaves, whose masters also are converted, are not to despise them on account of their being Christian brethren and on a level in that respect; but on the contrary, considering that the benefit of their service accrues to those to whom they sustain this relation of brethren they are to serve them with more cordiality and faithfulness on that account. The congruity and propriety of this is apparent from the preceding observations and the texts quoted. The Gospel does not abrogate the relation between masters and slaves, nor absolve either of the parties from the duties incident to that relation. It addresses itself directly to men in

that relation and requires them in the most solemn and imperative manner, to discharge their respective duties towards each other conscientiously and with good will, out of obedience to God and regard to the impartial decisions of the judgment day.

5. Ministers of the Gospel are expressly required to teach the truths, and exhort to the performance of the duties enjoined in the Scriptures above quoted. No duty can be plainer than that of such teaching and exhortation; and considering the light in which the Gospel respects the whole subject, none can be more clearly necessary to the honor either of doctrinal or practical Christianity. If the Gospel does not abolish the relation of masters and slaves, if slaves are bound to be subject to their own masters, and to show all good fidelity in their service, for this reason, viz. that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; if in that, their obedience to God is to be manifested in their cheerful and faithful obedience to their masters according to the flesh, then the clear and unreserved inculcation of these things is required, not only by the Divine authority, but by every consideration of benevolence and good will to those who are under the yoke of servitude. If they are not taught these things they will assuredly go astray. The Scriptural path of duty in which they are to render obedience to God, cannot be pointed out to them, nor can their supreme or their relative obligations be made known, without such teaching and exhortation as is here enjoined.

Nor is such teaching to be confined to slaves or slaveholders. It is teaching the wholesome words and commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is according to godliness; and is therefore necessary to be known by all who desire to understand the Gospel and to regulate their conduct by it. Those who do not attain Scriptural views of this subject, are exposed to be led far astray both in their opinions and their conduct by evil passions and false dogmas, as indicated in the passages copied at the head of this article, and as actual experience abundantly evinces.

6. Whoever teaches otherwise than according to these Scriptures, departs from the truth and practices ungodliness.

"If any one teach differently, by affirming that under the Gospel slaves are not bound to serve their masters, but ought to be made free, and does not consent to the wholesome commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the

doctrine of the Gospel which in all points is conformable to true morality, he is puffed up with pride, and knoweth nothing, either of the Jewish or of the Christian revelation, although he pretends to have great knowledge of both ; but is distempered in his mind about idle questions and debates of words, which afford no foundation for such a doctrine, but are the source of envy, contention, evil speakings, unjust suspicions that the truth is not sincerely maintained, keen disputings carried on contrary to conscience, by men wholly corrupted in their mind, and destitute of the true doctrine of the Gospel, who reckon whatever produces most money is the best religion. From all such impious teachers, withdraw thyself and do not dispute with them. Macknight's Paraphrase, 1 Tim. vi. 3—5.

"These things which I have been mentioning, take care, O Timothy, to teach, and exhort thine hearers always to maintain a due regard to them. And if any one teach otherwise, if he attempt to broach principles contrary to these great maxims, and attend not to such sound and wholesome words, even to those of our Lord Jesus Christ, as these may with strict propriety be called, and which express the doctrine that is agreeable and subservient to the great cause of practical Godliness, which it is the declared design of the Gospel to promote in the world : whatever fair shows of simplicity and humility he may affect, he is certainly proud, and, whatever conceit he may have of his superior knowledge, he is one who knows nothing to any good purpose ; but like a man *raving* and delirious in a fever, he runs on, declaiming on idle questions, and useless *debates about words* ; from whence no good can be expected to arise, but, on the contrary, a great variety of mischief, *envying* those more regarded than themselves, *contention* with others who will not submissively yield to what such self-sufficient teachers dictate *abusive language*, which their intemperate zeal deals around to all who offend them, and *evil suspicions*, and obnoxious representatives of the worst and most amiable characters. *Angry debates* of men whose minds are corrupted and averse from the truth, for which they pretend so eagerly to plead ; *while they* seem to suppose that which promises the largest quantity of *gain* to be most worthy of their pursuit ; and would, if possible, varnish it over with the venerable name of godliness. *Turn away* therefore *from such*, and have no intimacy with them." Doddridge Par. of the same.

"These things Timothy was directed to teach and enforce, as matters of the greatest importance; and if any persons taught otherwise, and consented not to such salutary words, which were indeed the words of Christ, and an essential part of the doctrine according to Godliness, he must be considered as a self conceited ignorant man, who being puffed up with an opinion of his own abilities was ambitious of distinction and applause, though entirely unacquainted with the real nature and tendency of the Gospel. Such persons were to be considered as acting or talking wildly, like sick and delirious persons, about hard questions, and disputes of words, names, forms or notions, which had no connection with the power of godliness."—*Scott*.

7. From such false, disputatious, mischief-making teachers, faithful ministers in order to obtain the approbation of God, must withdraw themselves. They must turn away from such, and have no fellowship or connection with them, or be partakers of their deeds and of their just condemnation. "Neither have acquaintance with them, says Scott, nor spend time in disputing against them." A heretic in doctrine may be admonished once or twice with some hope of his recovery; but the erroneous sentiments, evil practices, and bad passions of these false teachers are so plainly and entirely opposed to the Scriptures, so impious, and of such ruinous tendency, as to leave no room to doubt as to their real character, and no excuse for those who have any association with them, or do not unequivocally and wholly renounce and turn from them. They may be very bold, assuming, and zealous; may labour to conceal or explain away the plainest precepts of the Bible; and may perhaps persuade themselves that their doings are at least humane; but whatever may be their pretensions, their errors are such as to render it improper to hold any controversy or have intercourse with them.

8. The like benevolent and conscientious conduct which is required of slaves toward their masters, is required of masters toward their slaves. In neither case is the obedience enjoined limited by political obligations or civil law, but is to be rendered as obedience to Christ under a deep conviction of duty and accountability to him.

9. There may be converted masters as well as converted slaves. There is nothing in the relation between them either before or after the change to bar the conversion of one

or the other ; nor is there any thing of that nature in the Gospel. In the first age both were converted, and continuing in the same relation as before, appropriate directions and exhortations were addressed to them respectively by the inspired writers.

10. The Gospel contemplates slavery as a relation between different human beings, which, like that between parents and children, or that between rulers and subjects, may exist without sin. Whether or not it does so exist in any particular case, depends not on the nature of the relation, but on the question whether the parties to it mutually fulfil their obligations and discharge their respective duties.—Hence special precepts are addressed respectively to slaves and to their masters as well as to children and parents, subjects and magistrates. Were the relation in itself sinful in one of these cases any more than in another, this could by no means have happened.

11. The obedience enjoined upon slaves and masters being required as matter of conscience, and of duty and responsibility to Christ, as that by which they are to adorn his doctrine, is of far higher moment in the sight of God, and of far greater value in its connection with the spiritual and eternal interests of man, than civil or personal liberty ; inasmuch indeed that the latter is, in comparison, of no account—not to be cared for. This is so clear and palpable that those who teach otherwise are represented to be disordered in mind, and destitute of the truth, esteeming gain—gain of any sort—the acquisition of liberty—to be godliness—the chief thing—the highest good.

12. The character of that sort of men who are described as disordered in mind, puffed up with pride etc. is ever the same, like the acts and methods of delusions which they employ, the spirit they manifest, and the mischiefs they produce. We have in the Book of the prophesies of Jeremiah a notice of such men about six hundred years prior to the Christian era. They were the prophets and divines who in the early part of the captivity of Babylon rejected the inspired truths proclaimed by Jeremiah, and denounced, opposed and sought to destroy him, while they raised a spirit of discontent among the people, declared to them that their captivity instead of enduring seventy years, would speedily terminate ; induced them to neglect the means of domestic comfort and personal well-being, and betrayed them into

measures calculated to exasperate their conquerors, and greatly to augment their own miseries. These things they did shortly after and in direct opposition to and contempt of the following and other like announcements of the holy prophet. "Thus saith the Lord to me, make thee bonds and yokes and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the King of the Ammorites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; and command them to say unto their masters, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, thus shall ye say unto your masters; I have made the earth, the men and the beasts that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his sons, and his sons' son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass that the nation and kingdom, which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; for they prophecy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land, and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish. But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord; and they shall till it, and dwell therein. I spake also to Zedekiah, king of Judah, according to all these words, saying, bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the Lord hath spoken against the nation, that will not serve the king of Babylon? Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying,

Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon ; for they prophecy a lie unto you. For I have not sent them saith the Lord, yet they prophecy a lie in my name ; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophecy unto you. Also I spake to the priests and to all the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord, hearken not to the words of your prophets, that prophecy unto you, saying, Behold the vessels of the Lord's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon ; for they prophecy a lie unto you. Hearken not unto them ; serve the king of Babylon and live." Jer. xxvii.

Notwithstanding these warnings, one of the false prophets, soon after, in the spirit of some of those at the present day who call themselves abolitionists, took the yoke from the shoulders of Jeremiah and broke it, and boldly proclaimed to the people that so the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar should be broken and that the captives who had gone to Babylon should return within two years.

Under these circumstances, the same delusion being in progress among the captives already transferred to Babylon, the prophet wrote the following letter to put them on their guard : "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all who are carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon ; Build ye houses and dwell in them ; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters ; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters, that ye may be increased there and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives ; and pray unto the Lord for it ; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye caused to be dreamed." After reciting the promises of their restoration at the end of seventy years in case of their obedience, and the threatenings of their ruin if disobedient, the letter foretells the destruction of the ring-leaders of the false prophets, who to signalize the enormity of their wickedness, were, in the presence of the captives, roasted in the fire by the king of Babylon.

The same sort of men are referred to by the prophet Mica,

iii. 5: "Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him." "They were ready to bite and devour such as opposed them; and even to declare war against those who would not satisfy their avarice and rapacity, 'being greedy dogs that could never have enough;' so that their peaceable and soft language was restricted to their prophesyings before those who paid well for them."—Scott.

This description of men have reappeared from time to time down to the present day, endeavoring to pervert Christianity to secular and political purposes; and to make it accountable, if not for the existence, at least for the immediate and peremptory removal of the greatest evils which since the apostacy of man have proceeded from his depravity and corruption, or which in the righteous providence of God have been visited upon him.

It is characteristic of this whole class of men to give precedence to the temporal instead of the spiritual interests of men. Though they sometimes drive at one thing and sometimes at another, and not unfrequently change the full tide of their zeal to an opposite direction, or push it to the utmost excess, without the smallest regard to consistency; they generally begin by professing extraordinary benevolence towards their fellow-men or some particular class of them, and aiming to reform them by some rapid and easy method, or to deliver them from some mighty evil, preparatory to their being in a condition to become virtuous, religious and happy. The course which their arrogance, ignorance and recklessness, usually induce them to take is as follows:

1. To decry and denounce those who do not agree with them or follow their lead, especially ministers of the Gospel, and of them the soundest and best.

2. To claim for their object and their plan of operations the first and highest consideration.

3. To assert such abstract propositions and practical dogmas as they deem fitted to the case in hand.

4. To bend the Scriptures and other reverend authorities to their purpose, or else deny or disregard them.

5. To enlist the passions of their followers, exact implicit obedience from them, and rule them with the utmost intolerance and severity.

13. These mentally distempered teachers know or apprehend nothing aright. They proceed as though there was in the apostacy and guilt of men, and the righteous government of God, no reason for the allotments and dealings of Divine providence respecting them. They overlook or disregard the corruption and wickedness of men and the moral government of God; and act as though all the evils of the human race might be easily removed by human means and change of outward circumstances according to the plans which they propose. Regardless of the inward sanctifying influence of the Gospel upon the hearts of men, which comes far short of the object which their zeal would compass, they would suppress these evils at once, and if necessary put them down by force. Hence the extravagant measures they adopt, the passions they exhibit, and the mischiefs they occasion. The true reason why they agree in a common object of professedly benevolent effort, is, because they entertain false notions of the real character and condition of man as a sinner, of the moral government of God, and of the spiritual nature and effects of the Gospel, which they wish to uphold, justify and propagate; and therefore whatever particular heresies they may hold, Pelagian, Unitarian, or those of less pretensions to philosophy and learning, like the crusaders of a former age, they raise what they assume to be the banner of Christianity under which to fight, conquer and produce the millenium of their hopes and promises.

14. The precepts which require obedience to masters, like those which require obedience to parents and civil rulers, proceed upon the ground that there is, incident to the relation, authority which the subjects are for conscience sake bound to respect. Those who teach an opposite system, however they may begin, generally end by denying and opposing the authority of civil, parental, and every other kind of government, and all subordination and inequality. The distemper in their minds hurries them on from one extreme to another. It is noticeable as showing the unquestionableness of the authority which appertains to the relations referred to, that the precepts which enjoin obedience upon citizens, children and slaves, uniformly precede those which prescribe the duties of magistrates, parents and masters.

15. No condition or relation can be more undesirable

than that of a slaveholder, on account of the responsibility of it, which would seem to be altogether disproportioned to any advantages or benefits which can possibly result to him. He has himself a master with whom in the final judgment, there will be no respect of persons. All his feelings and all his actions, respecting his slaves, are either in obedience to, or in violation of his obligations to that omniscient and impartial Judge. If then he considers that the relation between him and his slaves, is not, like some other personal relations, natural and necessary; that he may, if he will, be released from it; and that while the duties and responsibilities attending it are intimately connected with his spiritual well-being, the relation can compensate him only with temporal and transient benefits, he surely must consider it a most undesirable condition, full of difficulty, requiring unceasing watchfulness and constant effort, and in a word, loading him with an excess of obligation and accountability, beyond what appertains to other men.

16. It is right and may be expedient for slaves to obtain their freedom when they can do it lawfully. It is, in such a case, at their option—they are not bound to do it—they may choose to continue as they are, or to become free, as they shall deem one or the other condition, most advantageous in respect to the discharge of their duties towards God, and the furtherance of their immortal interests. This is implied in the entire scope of the subject as it is treated of in the Gospel; and particularly in the fact that the relation is not in itself sinful, and by the consideration that in all their conduct they are to have supreme regard to their spiritual concerns. It may be expedient for slaves under certain circumstances to decline the offer of freedom for the reason, that they can better discharge all their duties in their present than in a new and untried condition; while, for the same reason, a person who is free is not permitted willingly to become a slave.

17. It is among the beneficent tendencies of the Gospel by enlightening the minds of men respecting their obligations to God, their relative duties and their true interests, and by sanctifying their hearts to undermine and dissolve this relation. It was because Philemon had experienced these gracious effects of the Gospel, that Paul felt assured he would release Onesimus from the bond of slavery as well as receive him as a brother. It is only by these gracious

effects wrought in the minds of individuals, that the Gospel operates an amelioration or subversion of any of the institutions and customs of the world ; and, in particular, with respect to slavery, it is perfectly evident that the contrary scheme and method of modern abolitionism is in no respect authorized or sanctioned by the word of God, but must be viewed as opposed and derogatory both to its precepts and its spirit. It is the scheme and method of men of disordered minds, who "teach otherwise," not according to the words or commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

18. It is one of the most striking evidencies of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures that they foretell the appearance, and so delineate the character of false teachers as to leave little room for mistake under any circumstances. They are described as "false apostles—deceitful workmen—self-lovers—money-lovers—boasters—proud—blasphemers—disobedient to parents—ungrateful—unholy—without natural affection—covenant breakers—slanderers—incontinent—fierce—without any love to good—men-betrayers—head-strong—puffed up—lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; having a form of godliness but denying the power of it—always learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of truth—resisters of truth—men wholly corrupted in mind—undiscerning concerning the faith—unruly and foolish talkers and deceivers ; who subvert whole families, teaching things which they ought not—who profess to know God, but by works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and concerning every good work without discernment." Macknight.

These may seem to be severe epithets to be cited as descriptive of any class of heretical fanatics in this enlightened age and country ; too severe, some will probably think, who yet are satisfied that there are numbers whose doctrines and teachings are subversive of the Gospel and of the well-being of their fellow-men. We refer such to the faithful, plain-dealing words of Scripture, which make no compromise with sin or with error, and which honor God by declaring the truth however directly and severely it may condemn the partizans of falsehood. The appearance, in after times, of such corrupt teachers, is clearly foretold. If, since the apostolic age, any such have ever appeared, of which history gives us an account, we may with certainty decide that many such exist in this land at the present time. To

characterize them more mildly or dissemblingly than the Scriptures do, is no true kindness or charity; but, on the contrary, would tend to confirm their self-delusion and arrogance, and to pour contempt upon the truth and upon its cordial and consistent friends. We are bound by every consideration of duty to God and to our fellow-men, to make the same discrimination between true and false teachers which the Scriptures make; and it behooves us to remember that one reason why heresies appear is, that those who hold fast the form of sound words may be made manifest.

ART. IV.—LATIN GRAMMARS.

By REV. ALFRED ADDIS, New-York.

A new Latin Grammar, by Rev. Baynard Hall, Principal of Bordentown Institute, N. J.

First Latin Lessons on the most important parts of the Grammar of the Latin Language, by Charles Anthon, Jay Professor of Columbia College.

The Eton Latin Grammar, by Rev. James Coghlan, A. B. Queen's College, Cambridge, England, and Rector of St. Paul's Church, Flatbush, Long Island.

A Latin Grammar, by the Rev. J. A. Giles, Head Master of the City of London School, and late Fellow of C. C. C., Oxford. Second Edition, enlarged and improved.

WHEN an author treads upon ground already preoccupied by hosts of others, it must be from a presumption on his part that he has something better to offer than his predecessors. It proves that he himself is dissatisfied with their labors, if nobody else is; and the public acting on this presumption, have a right to require some satisfaction at his hands for the expense they are to be put to for the maintenance of this new fledged bantling. On a subject so trite as Latin Grammar, it might be reasonably concluded, that as we have had a superfetation of elementary treatises, there ought to be some general demand for the infliction of a new

set of stereotype rules on the patience of the teacher and the scholar. After the shape and stature of both have been conformed to one iron model, it is no slight punishment to put them to the fresh torture of a new elementary organization. A great quantity of elementary trash has been thrown upon the market, since the secret has oozed out as to the profits which have accrued to authors and publishers from the perpetration of primers and spelling books, and all kinds of literary patchwork. A rabble of literary tinkers and cobblers have infested the avenues of the temple of learning, and "the last infirmity of noble minds" has made way for the money-changing propensities of pirates and plagiarists, and ten other unclean spirits more wicked than they. If an author of an original genius should unluckily pass through this gang of second-hand dealers, he would find himself robbed of some article of his dress, and behold the prize on looking round barefacedly exposed for sale, before he could enjoy the legitimate benefits of his own property. The right of the appropriation of the labors of others is not to be derived from setting them in fresh typographical habiliment. That cannot be said to constitute a new work which, without changing the matter and principles, merely varies a little the form of what has preceded it. Standard works of learning which have assisted thousands in the acquisition of classical knowledge, should not be driven out of circulation, merely for the purpose of giving currency to petty larceny compilations, which come recommended only by the drapery of the typographical art which has been too often scandalously squandered on such mongrel pigmies of the human intellect.

We do not intend, that these remarks should be applied to the authors whose names are prefixed to this article. We are inclined to believe that a perfect latin grammar is still a desideratum ; we believe, that any one is fully justified in offering himself as candidate for the office of grammarian *laureat*, though we are of opinion, that in matters of grammar as in every thing else, no two minds will be found to agree as to the best form in which its principles should be presented ; and consequently for general convenience, the palm should be given to that grammar which has been already sanctioned by the prescription of long established usage. There should be an eternal fitness about the forms of first principles, that their adoption might

be general, and their usefulness universal. Uniformity is essential in grammatical dogmas as in other matters of greater importance. But as it is impossible altogether to stem the current of innovation, or repress the democratic rage for authorship, we must go along with the spirit of the age, and attempt to moderate its violence by some wholesome strictures.

Brevity and perspicuity, definiteness and comprehensiveness, fact and philosophy must be the prominent properties of a good grammar. He who can furnish these requisites may draw up a code of laws for the United States. But no grammar possessed of all these characteristics has as yet been produced, owing to the deficiency of talent employed upon the subject. At least it might be so presumed from the quantities of authors who have written upon this important science, as if in disparagement of the capacities of those who have preceded them.

The Eton Latin Grammar just republished on this side of the Atlantic, has for a long period enjoyed a high reputation in the mother country. It is from this the most eminent scholars of the age have drawn their first knowledge of the language; and it has been banished from American schools only because its syntax is composed in Latin, and its *Propria quæ maribus* and *As in præsentî*, or the accidence of genders and of the inflexions of nouns and verbs drawn up in Hexameter memorial lines, leaves too great a tax on the memory. It is however from this part of it it has obtained much of its celebrity and usefulness. The plan is much better than that pursued by other grammars, of presenting long lists of nouns and verbs, arranged according to their initials and terminations, to be passed over by the student, or referred to only as occasion requires. The student of the Eton grammar seldom betrays those marks of ignorance of the minor yet not less essential properties of the language which American scholars evince when they have to make trial in Latin composition. They have not been accustomed to the drudgery of over stocking their memory. They have passed by rail road over the rudiments, and consequently their acquisitions are very defective and superficial. If a grammar is to be valued by what is learnt from it, the Eton grammar is a better summary of the language than the more diffuse grammar of Adams, enriched as it is with a treasury of notes which is never drawn on. Its rules are concise and

more definite: and if the syntax is written in Latin, it may be said in defence of that form, that what is more difficult to be acquired by the memory, is, when once acquired, more permanently retained there.

There are certain elementary parts of every language which ought to be indelibly impressed upon the memory, before any other part of it is touched. The Eton grammar is formed on this design; and no one after having conned the *Propria quæ maribus* and *As in præsentī* can ever forget those necessary rudiments of the tongue, the genders and inflexions of nouns and the conjugation of verbs.—These essentials ought not to be thrown into notes; but to be protruded on the page in a bold type and a commissible form. The material parts of the accidence ought to be fully developed without abridgement. We are not to be told that *alius* is declined *alius* in the genitive case but in other respects like *bonus*, as Adams and Hall inform us, but it ought to be declined in full as it is in the Eton and Anthon's grammar, *alius, alia, aliud*, etc. The inflexions must not be cut short and chopped up by hyphens, as Hall has done, through an illjudged economy of paper and type. This perplexes the younger student, and is after all no real saving. What is essential to be learnt in the accidence, ought to be displayed in bold type and in a full memorial form. Scholars ought to be early drilled in committing this to memory, as was always the practice pursued in schools in England, our ancestors rightly judging, that before the maturer developement of the mind, boys might be usefully employed in the mechanical process of stocking their memories with the elementary materials of the language, so that from habit they might acquire a natural familiarity with its moods, cases, and genders. The Eton grammar is, in this respect, superior to Anthon's, as Anthon's is to Adams's, and Adams's to Hall's. But here we are not considering the systematical part. Another thing is the diction of the accidence ought to be plain and perspicuous, without any technical refinements or any puerile elucidations. Thus we do not want to be told, that the three degrees of comparison might be called "the indefinite, the definite dual, and the definite plural," which are not so expressive as the ordinary terms. So Mr. Hall. Nor do we desire such an illustration as this. "The Latin alphabet is the same as the English except in its wanting the *w* and also the *capital Y*." So Professor An-

thon, this is like the elucidation of a certain mathematical Professor, who always informed his pupils that the sign of multiplication might be distinguished from the sign of addition, from its being made like St. Anthony's cross. We do not agree with some, that the memorial method finds a sufficient substitute in the use of a general *Praxis*. The *praxis* ought not to be a praxis of reference, but a praxis of memory, a trial of previous acquisition. It ought not to be merely an examination of what students understand from reading; but what they understand and know from remembrance.

The grand deficiency of the grammars of the present day in that portion of them called the Syntax, is the utter absence of all definiteness in the rules, if indeed, such as they are, they can be called *rules*. "One substantive governs another signifying a different thing in the genitive." "An infinitive has an accusative before it." "One verb governs another in the infinitive." These and others are comprehensive enough, but from want of definiteness, are in the long run not true. One substantive governs another signifying a different thing in many other cases besides the genitive, and this only takes place where it has another to govern, which is not always the case. An infinitive has not always an accusative before it. It sometimes has no case at all before it, being frequently the subject of the verb. One verb does not always govern another in the infinitive, but sometimes in the subjunctive. Mr. Hall and Professor Anthon have seen the vagueness of these rules, and have substituted others. Mr. Hall says, "the genitive is governed by the name of the thing possessed or defined." Professor Anthon, "A noun which limits the meaning of another noun, denoting a different person or thing, is put in the genitive."—Mr. Hall has left the rule altogether out concerning the accusative before the infinitive, while Professor Anthon has judiciously restored the Eton rule. When *quod*, *quin*, *ut* or *ne* is omitted in Latin, the word which would otherwise be in the nominative is put in the accusative, and the verb in the infinitive mood." Mr. Hall has thrown his rule on the subjunctive and infinitive into a long ill digested note, while what he calls a rule on the subject, viz. rule 60 is not a rule but a definition. In fact one verb governs another in the infinitive, when the latter is the object of the former, and in the subjunctive, when it denotes the wish or pur-

pose of the former or some contingent action dependent on it. Mr. Hall has attempted a new rule on the ablative absolute. "A noun and a participle, constituting a new subject in a sentence, are put elliptically in the ablative." But however this does not appear to be the true *rationale* of the case.

It has been Mr. Hall's favourite object throughout his grammar to present the philosophy of the language along with its phenomena, or in other words, to preserve the synthesis of the old grammars, and illuminate the genuine laws of the syntax, with analytical notes. But it is our opinion, that if we are to introduce at all the theory of the analytical art into the illustration of the syntax, the rules ought to be the synthesis *founded* upon the analysis. It has been lately growing the fashion by their particular votaries to array the analytical method against the synthetical, and the synthetical against the analytical, as if they were necessarily distinct and independent, as if the whole was not made up of its parts or the parts did not compose the whole; as if one could not be the result of the other. We believe that a system of rules may be formed which shall be more fully and naturally the result of analysis, than any which has yet appeared. The analysis might even appear in grammars designed for higher use, for those who are prepared to investigate the language philosophically. It is owing to imperfect analysis that some of the synthetical rules are unintelligible to beginners.

What real information is conveyed to us when we are told that "one substantive *governs* another, signifying a different thing in the genitive." This is a rule but where are the instructions? We are left to guess or fancy what is meant by *govern*. *Government* is an imaginary quantity, an algebraic assumption, an *x* assumed, which at the end of years we shall have some glimpse of, when we have finished the study. Is the genitive *governed* by the name of the thing expressed or defined? Is it not the nature of the genitive itself to denote possession, or to define the meaning of some other word? Does the nominative in the phrase, *the love of virtue*, govern the genitive, more than the genitive does the nominative? Or rather does not the genitive govern the nominative when it defines it? Does one word govern another in the infinitive; or is it not rather the nature of the infinitive, its very accident, which

places it in the state in which it is? No rule on one science should be expressed in terms of any other. A rule should use plain words without a figure, and leave nothing to be interpreted by the fitful visions of fancy, which vary always in different individuals according to the circumstances which have formed their ideal associations. Would it not be much better to form the syntax on the accidence of the language, and the accidence on a just analysis, by showing the various uses of the moods and tenses and cases, rather than confound the scholar by an indefinite, vague, theoretical, imaginary assumption, which has no foundation in the nature of things?

The genitive is a case which denotes the *genus* or kind to which something else belongs, and is used to define qualification or ownership, as *the love of man*, which expresses the kind of love; *the boy's book*, which points out its owner. The *ablative* is a case of circumstance which *takes away* or detracts from the abstract agency of the subject, and is employed to denote the cause, manner, instrument, time or occasion which limits the operation of some other case. This is the true rationale of what is called the ablative absolute: as, *Ille, Tarquinio regnante, venit in Italiam*, he, on Tarquin's reigning, *that occasion*, came into Italy. There are no doubt apparent anomalies in the language, which at first sight may seem to defeat any general method of analytical synthesis; but all these might vanish before a just and enlightened discrimination. Men have been always accustomed to think and speak according to rule; and in the divine art of language, there *must* be a philosophical system, unless the confusion of Babel spoiled it all.

Professor Anthon has blended some of the more familiar rules of syntax with the accidence, as a seasonable occasion offered itself; but not at all upon the principle which we have just been proposing, on account of his subservience to the old despotism of syntactical *government* which has robbed the elements of accidence of their democratic independence to speak and act for themselves. Yet accidence and syntax ought to be more united than they are, however, not by any chequered juxtaposition, but by being converted into one homogeneous substance. Does not the accidental nature of the parts of speech, of itself, determine their position in a sentence? Do not they of themselves move in their proper place without any *law*, if only their proper

nature is assigned to them? It is true law must be added on account of transgressions; but there is not so much need of that, if the nature of the system is well established.

Professor Anthon's summary of the syntax, on the old system, is perhaps on the whole excellent; and this appended to the *accidence*, *Propria Quae maribus*, and *As in Proesenti* of the Eton Grammar, would form a good summary of Latin Grammar. There is too much *minced meat* about Mr. Hall's *Accidence*; and his *Syntax* is a crude medley of synthesis and analysis, a mixture of two systems, without any digestible union. We have not much occasion for fresh Grammars if students only learn well what they already have. The wisdom of our ancestors perhaps has not been overrated, when we look at the empirical attempts at improvement in the present day. We have splendid outlines which want filling up, a great surface without habitations, immense credit without any capital, much pride without substance, a great deal of rolling without any gathering. Such is the character of literary merit and enterprize of the present day. It may be admitted that there is a good deal of something somewhere, if we could only find it; what we find is all borrowed. We are of opinion after all, that the Eton Latin Grammar is the best grammar that can be found, and we wish it general success.

ART. V.—GREAT VALUE OF THE CLOSE STUDY OF THE
CLASSICS AS A MEANS OF MENTAL DISCIPLINE, AND
THE BENEFITS WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM IT TO OUR
NATIONAL LITERATURE.

No. III.

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HAVING dwelt at some length in a previous article on the loose and defective manner of studying the classics which prevails in most parts of our country, we would gladly dismiss this part of our subject. One who discusses with freedom any prevailing fault, is in danger of acquiring a railing

spirit, and even of becoming ultra in his opposition to ultraism. We may talk of the good old way until we become completely blind to every thing that is commendable in the age in which we live. There is beside, an air of dogmatism and supercilious pedantry which seems to attach itself to one who is busied solely in the work of condemnation, however well grounded his positions, or however much there may in reality be need of reform, in the department to which he directs his attention.

We would gladly avoid this spirit by indulging the cheerful hope, that in many parts of our land the state of things is not as bad as has been represented; and would altogether decline the ungracious task, were it not for the confident assurance that the public mind is to some extent conscious of the truth of the statements which have been made, and willing to concur in decided efforts at reform.

One who is a declared enemy to the study of the classics, and who is at the head of a theological institute of some notoriety has made statements somewhat similar to those contained in the former articles. This witness is true, for whatever purpose, he may have given his testimony. We cannot however agree with him in his conclusion, that because many a professedly educated theologian has been unable to read his Greek Testament, we should therefore abandon altogether the study of classical Greek, the only method by which the New Testament student can be made something more than a mere consulter of lexicons, or be able to decide for himself without a continual reliance upon the labor and investigations of others. Whilst the argument is rejected as utterly illogical, the facts on which it is based may be freely admitted. Believing that classical education has substantial claims upon the public attention, and that those claims will in time be appreciated, even should it be by experience of the evils which their total neglect would occasion, we would hail the strongest representations which adversaries could make, as in reality and eventually aids to the cause.

A few thoughts more on the state of classical literature among us, and the evil consequences which flow from a defective method of study, and we dismiss the unpleasant subject. The benefits which would result from an opposite course to our national literature; which would be felt in the improvement and quickening of our decaying language,

in the elevation of the standard of criticism, and above all, in the soundness of our theological views, would form the more pleasant theme of subsequent reflections.

The remarks which have previously been made need not be confined to the study of the ancient languages. The evil does not stop with them, nor does it cease when the student has once left the walls of his college. Habits thus acquired follow him through life. They cling to him during his course of professional study, and manifest their baneful effects when he is called to enter upon the discharge of professional duties. He who has never learned the pleasures of accuracy in those studies by which if properly pursued, this most important of all habits might have been effectually attained, will probably never experience them in the pursuits of subsequent life. The temptations to hurry and impatience will be still stronger, whilst in consequence of the defects in his previous course, there will be less strength of mind to resist them. An empty babble about the freedom of thought and the spirit of the age has formed the sum of all his acquisitions, and it is most likely that this *spirit of the age* will be exemplified during the whole of his unthinking and unprofitable career. He who has passed with rail road speed through the precise sciences of mathematics, philology, and logic, and gathered only confused glimpses of the regions he has traversed, will not feel disposed to abate his speed, or curb his impatience in law, politics, or theology. Having progressed thus far at so little expense of thought and labor, why should he be led to suppose that his subsequent studies will not furnish as easy a conquest? Can it be imagined that the student whose geometry leaves him almost with the signing of his degree, or who has gained so little classical knowledge that he forever closes his books after the termination of his commencement exercises, will ever have his attention chained down to the rigorous studies of law or theology? Will these debated fields be ever fully explored by one, for whom the precision of his more early studies had acquired no charms; whose mind they have left a wilderness of confused impressions, or only stored with the pernicious seeds of self conceit, instead of the docility and modesty of well defined thought?

There is no species of knowledge so important for us, as to understand the true extent of our knowledge; to know *what* we know, and also (if we may adopt the singular phra-

seology of the Greek philosopher) to know *what we do not know* ; to be able to command the resources of our own minds ; to measure the real extent of our mental acquisitions, and each department and subdivision of them, with as much correctness as the careful merchant comprehends the state of his accounts, and the exact amount of all his available means. Confused knowledge stimulates but cannot guide. Science in its primary sense is the clear perception of the limits and relations of ideas. Whilst their boundaries are undefined they mingle together and beget only phantoms which are ever leading us farther and farther astray from the truth. Had the mind which is under such evil influences been happily left in ignorance, it might have safely followed the guidings of better disciplined intellects, and found its security in its docility. When injured by a loose course of education, it loses the salutary control of authority, and finds no substitute in the legitimate exercise of the reason. It is in this sense alone, we would understand the maxim of Pope, or else would utterly repudiate it. A little knowledge instead of being a dangerous thing, is a blessed acquisition, a precious boon of Heaven, if its real nature and extent are only accurately determined. Without this, its evil qualities and pernicious effects are in the direct ratio of its quantity.

We have indulged in these general remarks, because it is found that loose and inaccurate modes of studying the ancient languages, are usually connected with the same defect in almost every other branch of education. A similar discipline is proposed as the object of them all, and the same habits of study are essential to its accomplishment. Could what are styled more rapid and easy courses ensure the same amount of real knowledge, their expediency might yet be questioned. Could teachers by a sort of supernatural inspiration, transfer at once into the minds of their pupils an intimate acquaintance with the various branches of science, the propriety of exercising this high prerogative might still be doubtful. Such knowledge would be only borrowed furniture, if acquired without that transmuting process, which connects it with the native ideas or inner property of the soul ; which makes it truly our own, and gives a title to it as the hard earned acquisitions of concentrated attention and laborious study.

To return however to our more immediate subject ; the importance of the study of the classics may be regarded under a three fold aspect. 1. As furnishing in its earlier stages a most valuable means of mental discipline. 2. As leading to an elevated standard of criticism ; in which term besides its common acceptation, is included that accurate knowledge of our own language which can be secured in no other way, and also the high science of philology in all its bearings upon mental philosophy, and the moral and mental history of the earliest and most interesting portions of our race : And 3d ; as opening the rich but neglected mine of thought contained in the ancient classic authors, whose treasures can only be fully explored in their own unrivalled tongues.

It furnishes, in its earlier stages, a most valuable means of mental discipline. Some in defending the study of the classics have dwelt upon this alone, as though it supplied the only or strongest argument in their favor. Adversaries have been willing to allow them some small merit in this respect. They might do for boys at an early age, when the memory was the only department of the mind which could be exercised. Even Combe, in his proposed revolution of the whole course of education on phrenological principles, would concede to them this slight utility. Although not regarding this early mental discipline as furnishing the only or the highest argument in their favor, still whilst assigning to it the lowest place, we would contend strenuously for its great importance. All of our three divisions might perhaps be included under this head, but for the sake of a more comprehensive arrangement, the term is here used for that discipline which is called forth in the more elementary course of study. *Scientiarum janitrix grammatica*, was an old maxim of the schools ; and whilst this faithful janitrix kept her station an effectual bar was presented to much false knowledge, which has since crept in, and taken up its abode in every part of the temple of science ; especially of mental and moral science. In this maxim however the term is taken in its widest range, as including logic, together with all which is now comprehended in the science of language in general, or philology. Among the Greeks it was almost co-extensive with the whole circuit of what we style literature. In modern phraseology however, the term is narrowed to the

science of the forms of words, and their relations in a sentence. Taking it even in this confined acceptation, we cannot easily overrate its importance.

English Grammar is a science which should be early commenced, and thoroughly pursued in all our district schools. It should be accompanied by the kindred study of Etymology, with all the helps that could be derived from our best English dictionaries, and selections from our most correct English writers. The history and science of *words*, thus taught, would not only furnish a better means of mental training, but would also be the inlet to more real *science of things*, than is derived from all the sprinklings of mineralogy, phrenology, political economy, and natural theology, which are now attempted to be crowded into the brief season allotted to our common schools; and which are the fruitful products of that system which aims not at the concentration, but the diffusion or rather dilution of knowledge. The train of thought in which we have indulged is very far from proceeding from a disposition which would attach little importance to the education of those who cannot enjoy the advantages of our higher seminaries of learning. "It is not good that the soul be without knowledge." It is knowledge however for the *soul* that the wise man means, and not those shallow draughts which only intoxicate the *brain*; not that system of education which produces only fit subjects for the lectures of empirical sciolists and free inquirers of every grade; which teaches political economy before it inculcates principle from the Divine oracles, and by its feeble attempts to prop Revelation and base it upon nature, instead of establishing faith, only suggests a doubt of truths which otherwise would never have been questioned. If they can only have a *little* knowledge, (and it is indeed but a little which in this short life even the most learned can attain) if they can only have a little knowledge, let it be the pure sterling coin. Let them in addition to the close study of their Bibles and catechisms, be as well instructed as means will allow, in the nature of that instrument by which they not only speak, but *think*. Let them study *words*. Then although the external objects of their knowledge be limited, will their thoughts be clear. Then, although they may know little of chemical tests, will they have something by which they may try the false spirits which are abroad, spreading every where moral and political delusion, through

that abominable abuse of words, which may be said to constitute one of the prevailing sins of the land. Let logic be thoroughly taught in all our primary schools, in the place of the mere smatterings of botany and mineralogy, and these herds of superficial reformers would no more dare to insult the sound *common sense* which would be the result of such a course, than a Grecian orator would have ventured to utter a false quantity before an Athenian audience.

The intense interest we must ever feel on the subject of elementary instruction, is our only apology for this slight digression. English Grammar for various reasons, which it would be out of our present course to assign, should precede that of the Latin or Greek. The latter however for all those who are intended for a liberal education should soon follow. Although some knowledge of our native land is necessary before we are prepared to travel, yet there can be no doubt that our domestic positions are best viewed from a foreign point of observation. In like manner, the study of another language, especially an ancient one, affords a more elevated stand from whence to take a clearer and more commanding prospect of our own. The study of the Latin and Greek not only furnishes a better mental exercise, but leads also more directly to a satisfactory insight into the nature of universal Grammar as a science. The want in our language of inflections and conjugations we would not style strictly a defect, and yet it cuts off, for the English student one main department of this science, viz. the investigation of the various changes in the forms of words, according to the various relations which are intended to be expressed. The Greek and Latin are, in this respect, a better type of thought, and more truly correspond to its natural and primitive expression; although it is admitted that some early tongues are destitute of this peculiarity—Words, which are significant only of the relations of other words, are ever the most abstract and have in themselves the least of definite meaning. A language in which these terms universally stand separate from the others, although it may possess more flexibility, must be characterized by weakness and want of integrity. Such terms must either be regarded as forming a part of the words whose relations and connections it is their only office to express, or, if the mind is compelled to rest upon them separately, they enfeeble the sentence, and leave a misty haze upon the thought. In

the Greek and Latin they are, to a great extent, actually incorporated in the words to which they belong, and form a part of them, as manifested in augments, terminations, and the various inflections of the noun and verb. The ideas of time and relation which they express, are more distinctly perceived in consequence of appearing upon the forms of the language, and thus instead of being purely abstract, they partake of the life and energy of the terms with which they are united. There can be no doubt that this is one cause of that superior power and vividness which is felt to belong to a Greek or Latin sentence when fully understood. The mind is compelled to receive it as a finished whole, and this integrity constitutes its clearness and its strength.

Another reason for the superiority of the Latin or Greek Grammar to the English as a means of mental discipline, is founded on the fact, that familiarity with our own tongue, and our necessary use of it before a scientific analysis of its parts, blinds the mind to its peculiarities and renders this analysis more difficult. New words, and new forms arrest and concentrate the attention. The idea of the abstract distinction between different parts of speech is aided by more visible differences in their forms. A new language is acquired at the same time with its grammar, and the latter is viewed as the most important part, or the frame work of which the words are the completion. We are aware that many regard the opposite of this as the natural, and therefore the better mode. Let us follow nature, say they, and learn another language as she taught us in our infancy; first the words, and then the grammar by our own inductions. There is a blind adoration of what is styled nature, which sometimes leads to the greatest absurdities. Because we are forced by a natural necessity to make use of our own language before we can study it synthetically as a science, some would contend that this mode must be adopted in all subsequent acquisitions. They might as well insist that the nurses milk should be used through life, because nature prepares it as a temporary support, before it has furnished the infant with teeth, for the mastication of his food. Did not the case involve an absurdity, or could it be supposed that without the previous use of language, a sufficient number of ideas might be called out to enable us to understand the rudiments of any branch of knowledge, it might with even greater propriety be contended, that the acqui-

tion of our own language should be deferred until it could be learned as a science. Nature however has placed her veto on this. Words to some extent must be acquired, before even the science of language can be known, and for the accomplishment of this, not simply a natural, but an almost supernatural process has been provided. Among all the phenomena of existence, no one is more worthy of special admiration, than the early acquisition of its native language by the infant mind. There is not only a rapidity and correctness of induction to which no parallel is presented in the highest philosophy of subsequent life, but also an evolving of what may be styled the soul's native logic, by a sort of instinctive intelligence of which it is utterly unconscious. Who teaches the infant mind not merely to associate sounds with things, but the simplest variations of sounds with the abstract ideas of number, time, relation, and quality? Who directs its supernatural powers of generalization? Can any one who scrutinises the phenomenon, doubt, that this is a still more wonderful exhibition of that invisible power, by whose guiding wisdom "the hawk spreadeth forth her wings to the warm south, the eagle maketh her nest on high," and the bee constructs her curious mathematical cell? In vain do we expect ever afterwards to learn another language in this manner. It must either be studied as a science, or a life must be occupied in imperfectly obtaining that command, which is acquired in so brief a time by the mysterious infant mind.

In consequence of being thus associated with no scientific order, or one which is laid aside and forgotten as the mysterious process of acquisition is carried on, our own tongue is for us least adapted to the study of grammar as a science; although for reasons which have been given, English grammar should be commenced as early as possible, and even made to precede the Latin and Greek. The mind having thus in some degree become familiarised with the more common scientific terms which are necessary to be employed, these two languages should be very soon brought in aid, that by their freshness, and the vivid manner in which grammatical relations are stamped upon their forms, they may relieve the mind from the confusion of those abstractions, which must be brought to the explanation of English Grammar when pursued alone. It is not necessary to dwell on the propriety of ever combining in classical schools the

study of our own language with the Latin and Greek, and of constantly intermingling parsing recitations in each.—The benefits of such a course are too obvious to need being particularised.

In remarking upon the early mental discipline which is derived from the proper study of the primitive languages, we have had reference only to that which is connected with grammatical recitation and construing. Even here they may most advantageously be contrasted with any of the sciences associated with them in a course of education.—Strength of memory, fixedness of attention, keenness of discrimination, habits of accuracy, the power of concentrating the faculties on fixed and definite objects of thought, until all their boundaries are precisely determined, and their more immediate relations distinctly perceived—these are the habits and states of mind which need first to be formed. On this foundation alone should we build, if we build at all. Any other foundation is in the sand. The expansion of the mind, or the developement of its ideas, to use one of the cant phrases of the day, must be the work of the subsequent stage. When the ballast is placed in the vessel, and the anchor is on board, the sails may be spread to the breeze. We believe most strongly in the sublime doctrine, that the soul possesses not merely capacities or possibilities, but innate *a priori* ideas of all necessary and eternal truths; yet if we wish nature ever effectually to develop any of her ideas in the present life, we must first prepare a way for her. Definite objects, and well understood words must be provided, as diagrams to which these ideas may attach themselves, and by which they may be represented and reflected to the mind's own consciousness. According as this is done, will these reminiscences of the awakened soul come forth in all their native beauty and clearness. The office of the teacher (if we may introduce into English a favorite word of Socrates) is strictly *maieutical*; yet let him not endeavour to bring the mind's infant offspring forth to light, until he has prepared fitting place and furniture for their reception.

With respect to the habits of mind which have been lately enumerated, perhaps there is no way by which they may be brought into more combined exercise, than in the proper study of Latin and Greek Syntax, and the unravelling of complex Latin and Greek sentences. Viewed merely as a sort of mathematical exercise for sharpening the intellectual

powers, no one can be more profitable to the student, than that which continually chains him down to search for the reason of the use, position, and connection of every word, even the smallest connecting or qualifying particle, in a finished sentence of a good Greek author. Great as is the importance of mathematical discipline, (which we would concede to any extent that is claimed for it,) probably an equal if not higher degree of mental acuteness is acquired by verbal and syntactical analysis. Even the investigation of the construction of the edifice calls into exercise some of the highest faculties of the mind, independent of the rich treasures of thought contained within. The compact geometry of Archimedes does not contribute more to chain the attention, and concentrate the thoughts, than the study, as a mere verbal exercise, of the highly polished and elaborate antitheses of Isocrates, the neatly constructed stanzas of Horace, the magnificent sentences of Cicero, where every thing is full and nothing redundant, the musical harmony and exquisite adjustment of the sweet periods of Plato's poetical philosophy, or that sublime power of words, when stripped of all extraneous ornament, which is manifested in the writings of Aristotle, and which Cicero has so well described as a river of flowing gold. The verbal analysis of English writers of equal merit would not be productive of the same results, because our vague familiarity with the language makes it more difficult to rivet the attention to that critical examination which is required for the full perception of the force and mutual dependencies of words.

In the second department, however, of the study of the ancient languages, which in its widest extent we have styled the department of criticism, there may be justly claimed for them a higher rank, and a decided superiority over their sister sciences. In this stage we may aim at what may more properly be styled the mind's expansion. The development of ideas naturally follows the previous discipline of the powers of memory, attention, and discrimination; and here the mathematics evidently fall behind in importance. Mathematical studies render the mind acute, but their exclusive pursuit has a tendency to contract it, or at least to confine its expansion within very narrow limits. Philology not only invigorates, but in due time unfolds the intellect. The one, as in the focus of a blazing mirror, pours the converg-

ing light of certainty upon an interesting, though narrow field of thought. The other, ever expanding, is a continual source of ideas begetting ideas, extending above, around, and within us. The study of powers and curves (tis true) is constantly producing discoveries of new truths, but ever in one direction. They furnish an infinite line of thought, but without breadth or depth. Out of this confined range, they are barren and unproductive. The other is a stream, which sends its fructifying influences over the broad fields of mental, moral, and political philosophy. It is a continual exhibition of the truth, that there is indeed a *spirit* in words, especially primitive words, and that their critical study furnishes the most direct inlet to the knowledge of our own souls. It inspires a conviction, that however much language, like the other gifts of heaven, may have suffered from the depravity of man, and the moral and mental darkness which it superinduces, it has notwithstanding a divine origin, and that to its ancient and sacred fountains must we resort for those influences, by which alone it can be purified and corrected. If philology has this advantage over the mathematics, with still more confidence may it be claimed, in respect to the natural sciences; and with safety may it be asserted (although we cannot now stop to prove the position) that more expansion of thought, and invigoration of the thinking power is derived from a close verbal analysis of one chapter in the Hebrew Bible or Greek Testament, than from the study of whole treatises on the facts and laws of chemistry or mineralogy.

The greatest difficulty in the mode of studying the classics in our country arises from the fact, that even when most faithfully pursued, it is not carried far enough. The student stops short of that point, where he would have begun to find his studies a source of exquisite delight. Only a little farther, and that position might have been attained, which would have been in itself the accomplishment of the great object. Unless the collegiate course can be lengthened, or the system of instruction in the primary schools so far improved as to leave a portion of the last two years in college to the higher departments of classical literature unembarrassed by grammatical drudgery, the most important object is almost wholly defeated. Only let a rising taste for the beauties and power of the classics (which is the inevitable result of previous accurate study) be once formed, or

only let it begin to be formed, and the work is done. The student will never lay them aside in subsequent life, but will continue to study them with a fondness constantly increasing, as maturer years add solidity to his judgment, and elevation to his critical powers. To fall short of this is only throwing away the labor of previous years, and unless some higher aim form the distinct purpose, either in the mind of the student or his teacher, it is folly ever to commence.

If, however, great pains are taken, this may be accomplished in respect to particular authors, in a more limited period of time. Should the student (for example) or the graduate who wishes to revive his knowledge, confine himself to some one Greek author, with whom in the ordinary course he had become most familiar, and review him repeatedly with a careful analysis of every word; not expecting too much at first but content that enjoyment should follow labor; should he thus persevere, he would, after a few faithful trials, find himself able to read without any verbal or mental construing. We mean by this, that he would be able to take the thought directly from the Greek in all its integrity, without changing the order, and without the intervention of any English words, which though necessary at first, do in fact always mar the thought by expressing either a little more or a little less than the true meaning, or by resolving a nervous Greek word for which we have no representative, into a diffuse and feeble circumlocution. No two languages ever so perfectly agree, that one can furnish an exact translation of the other except in some mere names of things; a fact which arises from the different aspects and feelings under which similar thoughts are viewed by nations remote from each other in time or space; and more especially is this difficulty experienced, when we attempt to transfer some of the fresh and vivid ideas of antiquity, into a worn and degenerate modern dialect. By perseverance however and continual reading with a forced exclusion from the mind of all English terms, the student will at length drink into his soul the spirit of the Greek; and the full sense of every word and component part of a word will be not only understood, but felt in all its native richness. By this means he will learn partially to think in the language, or at least to fall fully and easily into the spirit and train of thought of the particular author whom he thus reads. The words will no longer be merely signs of corres-

ponding English words, but representatives directly of their own ideas. General terms in English do not ordinarily in reading suggest any sensible image to the mind, but are only said to be *understood*, when through habitual association, the fitness of their connection with other terms, is felt and acknowledged. This may not only be done with equal effect in Latin or Greek, but it may even be said, that abstract terms are less abstract in these languages than in the English. The primary sense, which is always a sensible image or action, is more closely associated with the secondary or metaphorical in the primitive tongues, than in those modern dialects from which the primary meanings have in a great measure faded away.

Having thus recalled them from the dead, he may dispense with that interrupting and enfeebling medium, which was at first used as an auxiliary, and resorted to from necessity. When he thus enters into communion with the soul of the ancient and long departed author, he will be astonished at the change which will come over his mind in judging of his merits. He will be lost in admiration of the power of that noble instrument by which his thoughts are expressed. He will find himself breathing a purer atmosphere, and his own ideas assuming, through this medium, a clearness and distinctness which they did not before possess.

By applying the same practice to other writers, he will find each one presenting less and less difficulty, until he can read almost any common Greek author, with nearly as much ease as any work in his own tongue and far more pleasure. He will thus acquire what may be called a tact in criticism, which no system of rules however closely studied could ever fully give, and will begin to feel that all which is said about the superior beauties of the ancient classics is not the mere affectation of pedantry. Previous to this, he cannot judge and should not condemn. To read Homer in this way, combining his sweet melodious versification with the full thought and poetical beauty of every word rising richly to the mind from the native Greek, is well worth even a long period of devoted toil. To the disgrace of our schools, must we again repeat it, few ever reach the point at which this taste even begins to be formed. The highest beauties of diction, eloquence, philosophy, and poetry are passed over by hurrying and unthinking

crowds, utterly heedless of the sacred classic soil on which they are so profanely trampling.

The study of the classics and the literature of antiquity has often been objected to by those least qualified to judge of their value. On no subject has ignorance manifested more unblushing impudence, or more arrogantly presumed to decide. Combe in his treatise on education tells us with characteristic modesty, that the views which many entertain of the importance of a knowledge of the Greek and Latin to a right understanding of our own language, are altogether erroneous; asserts that the sounds which the English have *invented for themselves* are as good as those which were invented by the Greeks and Romans: gravely asks what benefit is derived from knowing that the Latin name for horse, is *equus*; affects great profundity in assuming the position that the knowledge of this fact will not assist a person in the art of rearing and managing horses: intermingles a train of argument, of the whole of which the above is a characteristic sample, with the most arrogant assertions in respect to the inutility of the study of the ancient languages, and the superior adaptedness for mental training, of cotton mills and glass manufactories to grammar schools and colleges; and finally concludes this whole tirade of shallow nonsense, by solemnly assuring his readers of a fact, which certainly needed no proof, that he never was able to overcome the difficulties and intolerable tedium of Latin syntax, during all the unsuccessful attempts which he made at the high school of Edinburg. Combe is a good sample of this whole genus of practical men, and his profound work embodies the substance of all their arguments. His own writings afford admirable illustrations of his favorite positions that words are mere *arbitrary* names for things; that each age invents its own language, and has a right to use it too, he might have said, in as many various senses as it pleases. The most wonderful manner in which the terms mind, law, organ, faculty, idea, substance, and others of a similar kind, are there released from their ancient shackles, and restored to that glorious state of liberty in which they mean any thing or nothing according to the exigency of the argument, affords a convincing demonstration of the narrowness of those old scholastic pedants, who would have abridged the freedom of thought by their rigid adherence to the science of words instead of things.

The only reply which such an argument seriously merits is the direct contradiction of what is so ignorantly assumed. Words, with the exception of the lowest proper names, are not the representatives of things but of thoughts. They represent what may be called the intelligible (*τα νοητα*) of things; that which is alone the object of the mind's contemplation; the relations of things; their genera and species; that which makes them the objects of science; that, without which, though man might gaze upon them with all the keen perceptions of some of the lower animals, he would never use his organs of speech, or generalise and classify by application of names, or reduce to the cognitions of science. Sounds may be arbitrary, but words are not mere arbitrary sounds, except in the vocabulary of ignorance and confused thought. They are not invented as an age or nation pleases. The fixed laws of mind, or the inspiration of Heaven, were concerned in their early and original adaptation however much ignorance or depravity may tend to unsettle and destroy it. The wisdom of Heaven in the origin of language, and the preservation of its purity in the face of all corrupting influences is manifested by the fact, that there is no dialect on earth in which the atheist or materialist can converse without contradicting himself. Neither is it true, as this author asserts, that we may have an extensive knowledge of things, and few words by which to express it, unless he means to confuse the meaning of the term knowledge as well as of many others which he uses. We may have an extensive perception of material objects (and so have the brute creation) but no knowledge (*scientia*) of things or their ideas, except so far as these ideas are represented by accurate symbols. Science cannot even begin without words, and it will only be strictly science according as these are well defined. Even when new phenomena are observed, they can only be named by referring them to some of the known or *a priori* laws of mind or matter with which they are connected, and according to which they are classified by compositions from existing vocabularies. The oldest language of earth has called things or events by no other term than words, (*de-bha-rim*) intimating that not things themselves, but *that* of things which alone words truly represent, constitutes for us, if not the only, yet the highest realities. It is too much to say that this was a mere chance application arising from the poverty of the language. There

is a deep philosophy in it, which manifests it to be the production of Him who employed the same term to designate the act of creation, and used it as a symbol for the highest being.

We would not have dwelt so long on this had not the phrase formed the standing objection of all those who are opposed to the study of the ancient languages. It is the mere study of words, say they, and not of things. It is a relic of the Gothic and scholastic ages, lingering as a useless incumbrance in the march of modern improvement. We find these objections put forth in every variety of form; in systems of phrenological quackery; in schemes of education based upon the false principle of elevating the lower, by seeking to degrade and undervalue the higher departments of science and literature: in the labor saving and thought saving courses of theological study; and in the anti-monopoly and levelling doctrines of some new-light politicians. The more equal and general diffusion of knowledge is the favorite catchword used by ignorant and uneducated men in public stations to gull the popular ear. The sound is echoed from meetings called ostensibly for the advancement of popular education, but really to enable their projectors to make speeches on a subject for which they care little, and of which they understand less. It is caught up in reports of legislative committees, and the declarations of societies who do nothing but publish their own empty proceedings; whilst all this time the cause of education itself stands still; our district schools are made the theatres of empirical quackery, and the important truth is unheeded, because less popular, that unless an equal or even greater amount of effort is put forth to sustain the higher departments of literature, and a truly learned class to regulate and turn to some good account this floating mass of superficial knowledge, it will resemble more the base currency with which our country has been flooded than a sound circulating medium.

The amount of time required for the acquisition of the physical sciences in their present advanced state presents an objection of more plausibility. The value of those sciences is freely conceded, and yet we cannot acquiesce in the claim which is sometimes made for them to be considered the main department of education. It may even be said that many of them are strictly professional and not branches of early education at all. They may load the mind with facts

and phenomena superficially understood, but without the aid of a higher and more substantial training, they can never *educate*, that is lead out the soul to a knowledge of itself, to an understanding of its own resources, and through this to a proper appreciation of the science of external nature.

Logic is more closely connected with grammar than with mental philosophy. If therefore we include logic with philology, the two sciences, of language and the pure mathematics, may be regarded, not only as the best means of elementary training and for making really practical men, but as the solid foundations on which all definite, substantial and truly useful knowledge must be placed.—As the latter of these two to the various branches of natural philosophy, so is the former, to the more important departments of moral, political, mental, and theological science. Without correct mathematical knowledge as their soul or pervading scientific principle, the mind, in the one case, acquires mere naked facts, or successions of phenomena, to which as an apology for ignorance we give the name of laws; and without the close study of language, the other departments which have been mentioned become a jangling Babel, in which true knowledge has no advantage over ignorance, or wisdom over folly. The truly practical teacher will therefore prefer to weary his scholars with the confinement of grammars and black boards, rather than to feed their minds with the empty pleasures of botanical or mineralogical excursions. If he can succeed in laying firmly these two foundations, he knows that he can build upon them any superstructure with ease and satisfaction. When they have been laid broad and deep they furnish the student with a vantage-ground from which at any time he may stoop down and make himself master of any of the natural sciences, to which his attention may be called in subsequent business or professional life.

If then the early discipline, and the subsequent expansion of the mind be the great objects of education; if its chief purpose be not so much the acquisition of a wide range of external facts, or knowledge in the sense of Combe, as such a command of the mind's internal resources as may secure to it a clear perception of the most valuable truths, and furnish it with a defence against the most plausible and prevailing errors; if in short its great aim be to awaken in the mind a proper appreciation of the comparative value of the various kinds of knowledge, and of their uses in reference to the

soul's higher interests ; if other benefits are comparatively of little importance or only to be regarded as subsidiary to these ; the issue may be fairly joined on the question, which contributes to these ends most effectually, the theoretical sciences of logic, geometry, and philology, or those practical branches (as they are styled) which are claimed to have a more immediate relation to the direct utilities of life, although this claim is often founded on the most slender and far fetched inferences. Or to present the contrast more strongly by a single case, (in which there is no wish to detract from the value of the science compared,) it may fairly be asked, whether more substantial thought, for the use of which the mind finds daily exercise, is derived from the studies of gases and alkalies, or from those stores of mental and moral science which are called forth in the proper study of the Greek language : the one giving us the composition of the chemical elements of the material things by which we are surrounded, the other when properly pursued being the analysis of primitive thought, and leading more effectually than any professed system of mental philosophy, to a direct acquaintance with the primary exercises of the human soul, as they practically developed themselves in the composition, structure, and syntax of the noblest language on earth.—Should we even (as some theorists contend) regard it as evolved from some primitive mental chaos by the laws of mind, as the geologists world arose from the laws of matter, still may it be said, that no where can we better study those laws of mind, than in this their most finished production ; and by no course, except the kindred study of the Bible, can we more effectually arrive at a clear comprehension of moral and religious ideas in their native state, than by a careful investigation of those terms, in which they were primitively and naturally presented. If we look upon it as one of the original tongues, miraculously produced at the dispersion (although this may be in opposition to the opinion of those who for some strange reason wish to transfer all primitive truth beyond the Indus) it acquires additional interest as one of the works of God, originally designed and preserved by Heaven as a special instrument for the conveyance of the truths of the everlasting Gospel, of more value as an object of study, and affording a more fertile field of thought, than all the wonders of geology, could we even penetrate to the very centre of the material mass on which we reside.

The science of external nature, when exclusively pursued, is continually leading the soul away from itself, from the consideration of truths which are fixed and eternal, to those which are merely phenomenal. It is emphatically a knowledge which puffeth up, "which speaketh great things," which from the easiness of its acquisition has great charms for a superficial and unthinking age, and which often under an affected or sentimental admiration of nature, and nature's God, conceals a hollow and hideous scepticism. That philosophy, which refers every thing to sensation and tries all things by experiment, would seek to render mind the mere blank sheet of a camera obscura, intended only for the reflection of natural objects and natural ideas. We need a system of education which shall turn the soul inward upon itself, and wake up those slumbering thoughts in which are found the elements of all moral or spiritual science, and the prime truths of religion natural or revealed. In effecting this object, no means are so well adapted to the end proposed, as the close study of the ancient world and the ancient languages; the study of man as he approaches his primitive state, and of those bright and living channels of thought, through which the native ideas of religion and morals, and the heaven-descended philosophy of Revelation are expressed "in words that truly breathe and thoughts that burn."

It is from the present almost exclusive attention to natural things, more than from any other source, that we have reason to fear lest a flood of infidelity should overflow our land. That slave of slaves, the boasting free enquirer, might perhaps rejoice in this as an apparent concession; but we stop not to bandy words with the infidel. It is sufficient that we address ourselves to religious men, and to a community which yet bears the name of Christian. In the quarter to which we have alluded lies our greatest danger, and we are never more strongly impressed with the thought, than when we find going the rounds of our semi-infidel press, some condescending compliment to Christianity from the pen of a distinguished naturalist. It marks emphatically the spirit of the age. Christianity is viewed as under great obligations to those eminent savans who can thus condescend to turn aside from their mineralogical cabinets and galvanic batteries, to notice its humble claims. We fear not for Christianity, but for the firmness of its present

hold upon the public mind, when we find so much affected importance attached to the chance remark of a Davy or a Cuvier. We do not pretend to question their sincerity; but what is there in their pursuits which should add consequence to their opinions on this subject? Why should the faith of our young men be strengthened by their approvals, any more than it should be weakened by the denials of a Jefferson? There is something in it which betrays distrust of the Bible, rather than confidence in its intrinsic claims. So far as the illustrious men to whom we have alluded made Christianity a distinct object of study, so far their opinions are valuable, and no farther; but what is there in the exclusive pursuit of the natural sciences, which should enable its votaries to be such superior judges of matters of which comparatively they may know nothing? Why should the bland and polite bowings of the naturalist to the claims of Christ and Moses be esteemed of so much greater value, than the conclusions of men who have devoted their lives to studies directly associated with Christianity, and who have had their minds drawn to them, because they felt the deepest convictions that all science is worthless, yea less than nothing and vanity, unless illuminated by this great central light of truth. It is by communing with such minds as Cudworth, Howe and Baxter, (although some might characterize them as bigotted and narrow minded theologians,) but above all by the close study of the sacred volume, that our young men might acquire a sound, and manly, yet humble faith, instead of that spurious sentimentalism, and those floating images of Christianity which are now so prevalent.

The examples are rare of any one thoroughly versed in classical literature and the philosophy of antiquity, ever becoming an infidel. A few mere pedants may, perhaps, be brought forward as exceptions; but it may be truly said that Christianity has ever in this quarter, found its ablest defenders; and that their defences have been marked by an earnestness and cordiality which generally seem wanting in the chance and condescending compliments of exclusive naturalists. The tendency of the study of the classics is to produce not simply belief, but a *believing spirit*, a deep sense of the moral and religious wants of mankind, and an exalted reverence for the Bible. Could they be studied as they ought, how much might be expected for the cause of

sound literature and substantial learning. How easy would it be to show the student the vaporings and emptiness of much of modern philosophy, by contrasting it with the unpretending simplicity, with which those noble ancients put forth their thoughts on almost all subjects, out of the range of the mere natural sciences; thoughts with them really original, many of which are now trumpeted forth as modern discoveries, and evidences of the march of mind in this glorious nineteenth century. How often would the student discover the choicest beauties of our modern poets, set forth in all simplicity on the classic page, and clothed with new charms derived from the freshness of antiquity, and the power of its inimitable languages? How often would he find sentiments which a modern political essayist would preface with a long and declamatory eulogium of their originality and vast importance, expressed in the unassuming pages of the ancient historians and philosophers, with a simplicity, manifesting them to be the common daily thoughts of minds which were ever clear and ever elevated? How often would he discover that many a moral or political theory, (and sometimes too that even a new view in theology,) which had been supposed unknown till the present day of light, has received the attention of these ancient sages, been detected as a hollow sophism, and classed long since in the list of exploded errors? The close study of the classics, whilst it kindled a generous enthusiasm, would teach us modesty; would often bring to mind, in respect to certain subjects, the truth of Solomon's maxim that there is nothing new under the sun, unless it be the ever newly rising ghosts of ancient errors; would aid the cause of religion and sound theology, by showing what reason, even the most clear and vigorous reason could not do, and by marking its failures would produce a sincere and cordial submission to the guidance of the Holy Scriptures. We have not the same danger to dread from the errors of the classic heathen, as from modern semi-infidelity. We need not be afraid of finding in their writings, any of those disguised and spurious exhibitions of Christianity which are worse than downright unbelief. In studying the philosophical writings of Cicero, or the herculean efforts of the great Stagyrte to penetrate the deep mysteries of existence, or the sublime musings of the soul of Plato, we feel that there *was* a time, such as has never been since, when, in the special providence of God,

human reason was made to put forth its loftiest efforts and its strongest energies, that its failure in reaching the summum bonum might be a solemn warning to all succeeding ages, and especially to us in these latter days, to put our whole trust in His holy and unerring word. Our deepest sympathies are called out for these noble heathen, as we regard them, thus striving to kindle into a flame the dim light of natural reason, or the expiring embers of primitive revelation; whilst nothing but feelings of utter abhorrence should be exercised towards those, who, in these days of Christianity, are striving to put out the light which Heaven has given us, in a cold materialism or a murky pantheism. Could we fancy the soul of Plato to revisit the earth, with what earnestness, might we not suppose, he would beseech some of our modern philosophers, not to trust in speculations which had in vain tasked his lofty intellect, but to thank God for the Bible, and betake themselves, with lowly reverence, and submissive confidence, to that light which he longed to see and saw it not.

We would not claim all for antiquity. We have indeed a light which but a small portion of the ancient world ever beheld; a *light shining in a dark place*, to which we do well to take heed, and by whose aid as it falls upon the classic page, we may now learn more from the writings of the ancients, than they themselves had ever conceived. The classics should ever be read with a continual reference to the Holy Scriptures. Some sensitive minds, whilst they apprehend no danger from the mass of irreligious trash, which constitutes the most of what is styled the light literature of the day, affect much concern in relation to the corrupting influences of the heathen poets and philosophers. Should there be in them, however, any of that immoral tendency, the youthful student, who carries with him this safety lamp, is fully protected against all the poisonous vapors of heathenism; granting them to exist to the greatest extent any alarmist ever conceived. With the Bible in his right hand and the classic in his left, he is prepared to estimate the value of the volume of revelation. Whilst he admires the one he will learn to adore the other. The just estimate which the ancient writers form of human nature, and their candid confessions of its deep depravity, confirm our faith in the corresponding declarations of the Bible, and produce a state of mind prepared to receive with submission the grand rem-

edy which it points out for all moral diseases. Let the object proposed to the student be ever the illustration of the truth of the Scriptures, and perhaps there is no human means by which a greater flood of light on theological subjects can be poured into the mind. When this object is constantly presented by a faithful and devoted teacher, and the attention is continually directed to every word and passage which has a bearing upon the Scriptures, either by way of contrast or resemblance, a faith will be acquired which all the influence of our semi-Christian literature cannot weaken, nor all the direct attacks of infidels overthrow. Almost any classic author will furnish ample occasions for this exercise. An ode of Horace, a page of Virgil, even a section of the dry historian Thucydides, (to say nothing of the philosophical writings of Cicero and Plato, or the religious spirit and serious mythology of the Grecian drama,) will direct the enquiring and attentive mind, to some resemblance or contrast, which it presents to the truths of the sacred volume. To accomplish this, the Bible of course must be constantly studied in connection with the classics. When this, (in consequence of the liberal spirit of the age or of the community in which schools are situated,) cannot be done, but one course is left for truly Christian parents and teachers. There must be a separation from the infidel and the latitudinarian. If this gives rise to what are stigmatized as exclusive or sectarian schools, be it so. The faith of the children of believing parents must not be sacrificed to false notions of liberality. Let there be hallowed retreats, into which the free thinking spirit of the age, in any of its deceptive forms, is not suffered to intrude, until a strength of mind, and a fixedness of faith, and a soundness of scholarship are formed, which shall be able to meet and put down its superficial science and boastful pretensions.

One reason why so little benefit of this kind is derived from the reading of the classics, even by those who study them most thoroughly, is because they are not read with any fixed object. What we do not look for we cannot in general expect to find; but when certain definite points of investigation are presented, the mind is ever on the look out, and what otherwise would not have attracted notice, acquires importance and arrests the attention. When the student thus reads with a fixed object constantly before his mind, and the continual practice of digesting whatever is

worthy of note under the two general heads before mentioned, he will be astonished at the treasures of thought which will be thus disclosed, and hundreds of passages, which without such a directed aim would have appeared barren and uninteresting, will be found pregnant with the most important meaning. Let him thus for example ever contrast Homer and Hesiod with Genesis and Job, the Grecian poets and orators with the Psalmist and prophets: let him compare Plato with Paul and John; the ethics of Aristotle (the best uninspired system ever composed) with the morality of the New Testament; the fundamental doctrines of the trinity, the fall of man in Adam, and his recovery by the atoning sacrifice of Christ, with the same great truths as they are shadowed forth in the mythology of the Greeks, in their traditionary annals, their religious and sacrificial rites, all testifying to a deep sense in man, both of unholiness and guilt. Let him treasure in his thoughts the almost inspired sayings of some of their philosophers, and the sublime epithets which their poets have applied to the king of gods, epithets which unquestionably came down from a remote antiquity, and surviving the purer primitive source from whence they were derived, formed an incongruous mixture with the fables and corruptions of a later age. Let him rigidly pursue this course of study and we may dismiss the fears which some honest minds have entertained of the immoral tendency of the ancient classics. There are books now used in our seminaries of learning, which, although written by those who are nominally Christians, have a tendency to weaken that faith, which the study of Socrates and Cicero would confirm.

A signal benefit which would result from the close study of the classics, and the acquisition of a general taste for their beauties among the liberally educated portion of the community, would be the driving out of that mass of trash which passes under the denomination of the light literature of the day. This anomaly has resulted only from a craving desire for something to fill the vacuum which has been produced by the long neglect of more elevated and soul satisfying studies, and which cannot be supplied by the interest taken in the physical sciences. Could the solid vein of ancient literature and philosophy be reopened in this country, we might expect it to be followed by the same effects as at the period of the revival of letters in Europe. An

elevated seriousness of thought would take the place of frivolity—theology and the more religious branches of philosophy would regain that standing, from which they had been suffered to be driven by the contempt of fools, and the jargon which pretended advocates had introduced into their vocabularies—just criticism would be fixed on those foundations which nature, and the ancients, her best interpreters, had established—our dying language would feel its reviving influences—pedantry would disappear when, as in the days of Elizabeth, every one who aspired to the title of an educated gentleman was a finished classical scholar—and that foe of religion, morals, and all manly sentiment, which is found in the light literature with which our press is teeming, would cease its enervating effects upon the public mind and taste.

The Greeks and Romans, to their honor be it said, had no light literature. Not only their history and philosophy, but also their poetry, had a seriousness and elevation, which cannot now be found, except in those great English masters who formed themselves upon the classic model, or lived in an age which was deeply imbued with classic influences.—The ancient comedy had ever a grave end in view, and always showed itself the humbler of boasting folly, and the scourge of prating demagogues. Even the strains of the pleasure-loving Horace and Anacreon possessed an elegance and a dignity, and oft times a melancholy seriousness, which cannot be found in the sensual and sentimental rhapsodies of our modern Epicureans. The novel was a thing unknown. Their lyric poetry was sacred to the gods, or if custom compelled it to celebrate the victories in the public games, it was ever made the channel for the conveyance of the most elevated moral sentiments. The Grecian drama would be degraded by a comparison with the stage as it now exists. No reader of their tragic poetry need be informed, that it was, for the most part, not only serious, and even solemn, but essentially religious. It embodied and personated in frequent representations the national religion, and preserved in the public mind an awe inspiring sense of the presence and retribution of the invisible powers. In the tragedies of *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*, holy *Themis* or the goddess of justice is ever represented as seated with *Jupiter* on the throne, and his avenging eye is ever upon the actors presented to us. Their moral is ever religious. Though they were not as expert casuists as some utilitarians, and nice calcu-

lators of the greatest good of the greatest number, yet their poems ever present to us a principle of far higher value. Wickedness, (according to their views of it,) is ever punished and virtue rewarded, not as the mere result of natural causes (the favorite philosophy of many of our works of fiction, and even of our graver systems of morality,) but by the direct interposition, and vindictive justice of the ever wakeful Jove, controlling and directing natural causes, when, and in what manner, it pleases him. Notwithstanding what is often said about the danger to the morals of our youth from the heathen classic poetry, yet it is a position which can be most fully sustained, that there is more which claims affinity with the devout spirit of the Old Testament, more which approaches the true religious fervor of the Psalmist, and the awful solemnity of the prophets, in the Grecian tragedies, than in a large portion of what passes as unexceptionable among the poetry and light literature of the modern press. We may even carry the comparison still farther, and contrast them with a class of productions which lay claim to more seriousness, and elevation of character. In some of their descriptions of their supreme divinity, he approaches nearer to the character of the holy and jealous God of the Bible, than the liberal and indifferent deity of modern rationalists; and we often find in them more of a religious Biblical morality, than can be met with among the sacred melodies and unmeaning sentimentalism of some of our most admired bards. Whatever is really noxious in heathenism may be neutralised, and even turned to good account, by ever associating the protecting influence of the study of the Bible, and whilst the student thus avoids the evil, he will often have his soul kindled and elevated by many a sublime sentiment of the ever serious, and oft times deeply solemn tragic muse of Greece.

In dwelling on the religious spirit which is manifested in the writings of the ancient world, and the inducements derived from this fact for the study of the classics, it may be permitted to digress a little farther. It manifested itself not only in their poetry and philosophy, but also in their moral and political writings. Whilst, in most modern productions of this kind a profound silence is observed, and a tacit compact seems entered into to avoid even the very mention of religion, the ancients seldom discussed moral or political subjects without giving a prominent aspect to

their religious bearings. We find more allusions to a controlling providence in some of Cicero's essays, than can be met with in whole libraries of modern political science. What lawyer of our day would devote a large portion, or any portion of his work, to an argument intended to prove that all law derives its sanctions, not from the people, but from the eternal law of God? How, in this respect, do our great American statesmen compare with the philosopher of Tusculum? The sentiments contained in the first two books of Cicero's treatise *de legibus*, if they were presented to the public as a modern production, would excite the loudest clamors of those who are such strenuous advocates for religious freedom, that they would banish the very names of religion and of God from all our legal codes and public charters. If we except the professedly religious world, it is a fact beyond all contradiction, that there was among the ancient heathen a more direct acknowledgement of the great fundamental truths of natural religion,—the doctrine of a future state,—of a divine retribution,—of the necessity of expiation of some kind,—and of a special providence,—than is now made by the great mass in nominally Christian countries. There was not that mean and timid shrinking from the express avowal of religious sentiments, which now is every where so prevalent. It seems as though the Gospel had set in a stronger light the atheistical and materializing tendencies, of that portion of the nominally Christian world, which rejects its direct influences. These remarks apply to almost all classes of the ancient world, but their truth is more especially manifested in the writings of its philosophers and statesmen. Let any one compare Cicero *de Legibus*, Plato's *Republic*, or Aristotle's *Politics*, with the best modern works on similar subjects, and judge which has most of the religious spirit; which in assigning the foundations of civil polity, and the true motives of human conduct, comes the nearest to the Bible, or has the best title to the epithet, Christian. Let us select *Ferguson on Civil Society*, as one of our best modern treatises, and as furnishing a clear illustration of this difference. This treatise was written by a Christian professor of moral philosophy, yet what barbarian from the reading of his book, would have any clue by which he might discover, whether the author was a Christian, or an infidel, or even an atheist. The whole argument is conducted as it would be if neither God

nor revelation was acknowledged. In treating of the state of nature, the early condition of mankind, and the origin of governments, what intimation does he give that he had ever heard of such a book as the Bible? Would Plato in the investigation of similar subjects, have thus slighted this most ancient and authoritative of all records, had it been placed within his reach? And yet the Christian author to whom we refer, and whom we have selected as furnishing one of the best specimens of modern political essayists, is not only profoundly silent as to its claim to give the most authentic information on these important matters, but also advances sentiments in direct contradiction of its account of that *state of nature* into which man, by transgression fell; and of the disorders which it has ever introduced into the moral and political condition of the world. What is said of Ferguson is true of the great mass of modern political writers.

On the other hand, how much more faithful to the truth, and to the Scripture account of man, is the heathen Tully: "*As soon,*" says he, "*as we are born and brought forth to light, we are plunged into every species of depravity, and every perversity of false opinion; so that we seem to have sucked in error with our mother's milk. Next are we handed over to teachers, and are by them imbued with such varieties of falsehood, that truth yields to vanity, and nature is buried under confirmed error. But when there comes at last that greatest of all teachers, the people, the universal multitude every where with one consent rushing into folly, then we become utterly infected with depravity of sentiment, and imbibe the false opinion that nothing is better for man, nothing more desirable, nothing more excellent, than honors, offices, and popular glory.*" The sages of antiquity fondly dwelt on the traditions of an ancient golden age, but they indulged in no dreams of future perfectibility by any means inherent in human nature. They lamented the depravity of man, and whilst some looked on in mute despair, others expressed the feeble hope that Heaven might yet contrive some means to raise him from his fallen state, and bring home again the outcast who had been so long wandering from happiness and virtue.

Let our young men study the Bible and the classics. Then will they learn not only just and noble sentiments, but also the true elements of moral and political philosophy—

the individual and social character of man—Then will they learn his state by nature, and will be led properly to appreciate the revealed means, by which his moral and political condition can alone be improved, and the sublimity of that glorious plan of redemption, by which he can be transferred to a state of grace and reconciliation with his offended Sovereign.

Allusion has been made to the gross abuse of words, which has arisen from a neglect to study the sources or fountains of language. Those who have been most guilty of this sin, and have done the most to muddy and confound the streams of thought, are generally the loudest in declaring, that the discussions of the most important truths turn upon mere verbal differences. The correction of this evil would be found in the close study of the ancient tongues; and unless corrected it threatens to undermine both mental philosophy and theology. The primitive men, both Greek, and Hebrew, did not use words without meaning. Their languages were a pure and honest expression of substantial thought, and unaffected by that degeneracy, which are the result of the attrition of ages. It may be a matter of doubt whether the power and clearness of the ancient writers is to be attributed so much to the superiority of genius, as to the advantage they possessed in those noble instruments by which their ideas were expressed. Happy for us that they died early. It is by this their immortality is secured. Having ceased to be spoken they have become incapable of change. Though dead to the voice, they are emphatically, and in spirit *the living languages*. Their words have life, and adored be the wisdom of God, in having embalmed them as the sacred depositories of his everlasting truth.

Some have built upon this phrase, *the dead languages*, their most plausible argument. Shall the dead languages—says one who would derive the most important of all knowledge in relation to the human soul and its moral and religious relations, from the examination of dead men's skulls—shall the dead languages be studied in preference to the living? Shall so much time be wasted in the acquisition of words spoken two thousand years ago, in preference to the cultivation of our own tongue? We would not waste an argument on so foolish an objection, but there are topics connected with it of the highest interest, and which would require that extended examination, which the length of this

article forbids. The investigation of what constitutes the life of language—the causes of its perpetual tendency to degenerate—the beneficial effects of the general study of the Latin and Greek in imparting vitality to the English—the great evils which in this respect must result from their universal neglect—and the importance of having some fixed standard by which these evils might be measured and prevented—are topics which must be deferred to some other occasion, in which we may hope for better opportunities, to do them that justice which their importance requires.

ART. VI.—KEITH'S DEMONSTRATION.

Demonstration of the truth of the Christian Religion. By Alexander Keith, D.D. Author of "The Evidence of Prophecy," &c. From the second Edinburgh edition. New-York: Harper & Brothers. 1839.

It has been frequently questioned, whether it is advisable at the present day to discuss the evidences of Christianity. But though the divine origin of our Holy Religion is not a point that remains to be proved; though it is better for Christians to reap the benefits of their Heavenly inheritance than to invite the children of disobedience to contest the validity of their title; yet as infidelity abounds, it is the imperious duty of those to whom God has intrusted the interests of his cause on earth, either to convince it of its delusion or to counteract its tendency. It is not enough that infidelity has been at one time routed. It yields to the vigor of attack, but, as it were, to gather strength for another and more formidable onset. Like some distant province which has been repeatedly subdued, it is ever rising in rebellion against its rightful Sovereign.

In the view of infidels, Christianity is a time worn system, and the arguments by which its claims to a Divine Revelation have been attested are deemed inapplicable to the illumined present; or beneath the respectful considera-

tion of minds disenthralled by the spirit of ecclesiastical and civil freedom. The intelligent and honest convictions which moulded the character and swayed the pens of the primitive fathers of the Church, or of the defenders of the faith at the Reformation, are in their judgments not to be philosophically distinguished from the mental prejudices and selfish interests by which superstition and error have in all ages been most strenuously supported ; while old works on the evidences of Christianity must with the system itself be legitimately referred to a common origin ;—the delusions of the dark ages.

Besides, the prominent objections of infidelity, as they successively issue from the same source,—the depravity of the human heart, are ever regarded as new. Striking the mind with all the force of novelty and mistaken for original conceptions, they are advanced by each in succession with all the pride of discovery, and all the assurance of unanswerable argument. Or, if their objections have been drawn from the infidel writers of the last century, as may be readily detected by the ignorance and malignity which they betray, they are appropriated as their own, and palmed on the community as the result of their own unaided investigations. It is important therefore, that each generation of freethinkers, should be informed that to every sceptical production, from Celsus to Paine, an appropriate refutation may be found ; and that the very arguments which they regard as peculiar to themselves, and such decisive proofs of their philosophic genius, are but the tame repetition of objections, which since the days of the Apostles, have been common to the ignorant or the vile.

Science, too, is constantly making, or pretending to have made new discoveries. And in the confidence of its powers, it is but too prone either to assail the credibility of Revelation, or to regard its authoritative intimations with contemptuous indifference. From the deductions of the truly scientific mind, Christianity has nothing to dread ; but as a little philosophy, according to Bacon, inclineth men to atheism, so does science falsely so called tend to embarrass the views and shake the faith of the simple. On this account also, there may continue to be an occasional necessity for works which shall either confound the effrontery of pretenders to science, or show that the actual discoveries of science are not at variance with revealed announcements.

It may readily be perceived that Chalmers in his astronomical discourses answered an end which could not have been anticipated by any preceding writer.

Considering, moreover, the multifarious proofs of revelation, it is not to be admitted that any one writer has done full justice to the Christian evidences. A single topic such as that which Warburton pursued in his *Divine Legation of Moses*; Butler in his *Analogy*; or Paley in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, has often presented an argument of indefinite extension—at once new, and in itself conclusive; and other enquiries may yet be suggested which will lead to the same conclusion by an independent train of reasoning. Though a well grounded belief in Christianity results less from any separate consideration, than from an almost infinite variety of circumstances which like the ramification of the veins in the human system, conspire towards one point, and terminate in one conclusion; yet the force of this conclusion may be enhanced by the elaborate prosecution of some one of the particular branches of evidence; and for ourselves, one point thoroughly discussed, and logically determined seems more calculated to work in the mind a true and firm conviction, than a multiplicity of proofs, however happily grouped, if superficially investigated. In the prosecution of separate topics, we are inclined to think that an important field is yet reserved for those who will effectually contribute to the fund of the Christian Evidences. Here also, other powers may be enlisted, besides those of arrangement and combination.

It is worthy of consideration, whether we have not been guilty of a criminal negligence, or mistaken policy, in having so long confined ourselves to the attitude of defence.—May not this be one reason, why Christianity has been so obnoxious to the attack of every insolent sophist.

Newton, we are informed, was never satisfied with having refuted the arguments of the Dutch philosophers. He must trace their arguments to their source, and ascertain the cause of their blunders. And it appears to us, that he who will refer the objections of infidelity to their sources, and disclose both the varied causes of their errors, and the difficulties which embarrass their positions, will confer a greater benefit on the Church and the world, than can now be effected by any volume confined to the usual course of evidence. Hence, we have been wont to regard, Faber's "*Dif-*

faculties of Infidelity" which was published a few years since, as more effective for the mass of minds, than any work of modern date, designed to subserve the cause of Christianity.

To essay a work, however in behalf of the Christian evidences, is perhaps a hazardous undertaking ; though it must be admitted that the temptations to write on this subject are by no means inconsiderable. The arguments are so numerous and palpable—available on every hand, that *a way-faring man though a fool* cannot fail to gather materials for a book of any saleable size. It requires as little exertion of mind, and as little amount of learning to fabricate a work of evidences which shall be acceptable to the mass of believers, as to preach a doctrinal sermon to an audience already convinced before any proof is adduced. In either case, every thing is prepared to hand, and in reference to each reproduction, a favorable prejudgment is secured, or may be confidently anticipated.

It is possible, moreover, to mistake the impulses of piety for the strength of logical conviction ; and to confound our love of truth with an ability for its defence. He who essays an encounter with the foes of Christianity cannot be too well assured of the consistence of his armor, and the temper of his weapons ; otherwise, nothing may await his rashness, but detriment to the cause which he has presumed to defend. "Every man," said old Sir Thomas Browne, "is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity. Many from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal for truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error, and remain as trophies in the hands of the enemy." 'Tis in vain to say with Dr. Keith, in his preface, that "the inadequate advocate of the truth may happily serve so much the more to show that the strength rests solely in the cause." The antithesis between works of imagination and of reason, cannot be more striking than the difference, in our judgments as to the causes of success or failure in these respective departments of mind. To ascribe the failure of a novelist or poet to the barrenness of his subject, were to overlook the fact, that the power of genius is evinced just in proportion to the paucity of its materials for weaving a thread of absorbing interest, or to the facility with which it can give to "airy nothings" a splendid "habitation," and an enduring "name."

But in relation to the advocate, whatever be the end which he desires to effect, if our judgments have not been committed, we invariably ascribe his failure not to the deficiencies of his intellect, but to the defects of his cause; and the reason is obvious. Though our own imagination transcend that of the author whose work has disappointed our expectations, yet when one undertakes to establish a certain position, we reasonably presume that he has preparatorily devoted to its investigation all the talents and aids which he can summon; that he is master of all the arguments by which it can be supported, and guarded against all the objections which may be adduced. Were this not the case, it is natural for the common mind to associate the merits of a cause with the intellectual address of its advocate; and infidelity, in its rancor against Christians, and in its eagerness to avail itself of any advantage which may be unwittingly afforded, is the last from whom either candor or discrimination can be expected. With them an individual defeat is the defeat of a cause; and one victim to the adroitness of infidelity tends more to our disgrace and infamy than many able defences would retrieve in years.

Besides, it is to be expected that recent works on the evidences of Christianity will surpass those of the past, or at least, that a comparison will not be altogether derogatory to the former. Certainly, it may reasonably be presumed that if former arguments be reproduced, they will be clothed in stronger terms and arranged in more effective order; that if old objections be reconsidered they will be more strikingly and conclusively rebutted. But if recent works do not equal the power of thought, and profundity of erudition, and severity of logic which characterise the works of the past, what must be the unavoidable inference, but that Christianity loses in strength, as it advances in age; that its advocates, now, cannot compare with those of a former period; that the evidences on which our fathers relied, impress our minds with diminished force; that either the present is marked by less ability and zeal in behalf of Christianity; or that the intellect which was once consecrated on its altar, is now, in consequence of the increasing light of science, devoted to objects foreign to its interests.

That gigantic minds and vast attainments have been enlisted in the conflict with infidelity, we need not stop to

prove ; and that the latter enrolls no names to compare with the champions of the cross, is set at rest by a mere allusion to such men as Cudworth, Warburton, and Lardner.

Now, if a man be not mentally qualified to compete in any respect with preceding writers on the evidences of Christianity, it becomes him, in our judgment, to confine his labors to his own retired sphere. He may lecture to the credit of his name ; but he will publish to the disadvantage of the cause. His works may gratify his friends, or edify his parish ; but they cannot meet the wants of the age, or benefit the world.

We are aware, that it is thought necessary at the present day, to popularize the old authors ; but this, in general, is to divest them of their merits and paralyze their force.—It is injustice to the dead, and no advantage to the living. A work on the Christian evidences which shall be adapted to the common mind, must be reduced to the extremest superficiality ; and a work of this character, we need not remark, so far from being calculated to convince the sceptic, can serve only to provoke his successful attack. We have even heard the regret gravely uttered, that Butler's "Analogy" was not simplified for the "Sunday School Union !" Now, we do not doubt but that modernized editions of works of this high intellectual order would meet a readier sale than the original copies, which demand no tribute except from the laborious and thinking few ;—the interests of booksellers would thus be promoted, while there would be an atmosphere as erudite pervading the Sunday school as the theological seminary ; but we should anticipate as much solid benefit from the plan as is imparted to infants by simplifying for their comprehension the principles of the Newtonian philosophy.

Men, in general, neither possess the talents nor command the requisite time and facilities for investigating the documentary proofs of Christianity. Doomed to daily toil and precluded at once the advantages of education and all habits of dispassionate reflection, how few amid the throng could ever attain to the belief of the truth, if in order to this, an ability to master its external evidences and to answer plausible objections were indispensably necessary.

The general mind, therefore, if ever impressed by the truth, must, in accordance with God's appointment, believe on the authority of their divinely constituted teachers.

From the nature of the case, the most cogent reasons which the many may be able to adduce for their faith, must be subsequent to their belief; and the argument which they can best understand and appreciate, and which, blessed be God! is sufficient to exclude all doubt, and repel every malign attack on their faith, is that derived from an experimental knowledge of the adaptedness of Christianity to the wants and woes of their fallen nature. Few comparatively can establish the truth of revelation by a learned process of reasoning; but there is no man, be he never so unlettered, who may not be brought to *feel* that God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.

We have been led to this brief train of remark, by examining the recent volume from the pen of Dr. Keith. His plan has emanated, we doubt not, from the purest motives, and his pages bear testimony to his zeal for the cause of revealed truth; but whether his "Demonstration" can be viewed as any addition to the body of existing evidences, is not so clear.

Amid the facts and quotations which crowd his pages, we recognise but little that has not been employed before. Most of the arguments, too, which he has introduced, if they be of any weight, are such as in different relations have been advanced by preceding writers; yet is not the volume to be undervalued on this account. These, for aught the sequel of our Review may intimate to the contrary, may be seen to constitute its chief merit; insomuch, as the reproduction of former arguments, at this late day, serves at least to convince us that time has tested their consistency and strength. For ourselves, whatever is ancient has peculiar charms, and in relation to the evidences of Christianity, the oldest are, in our view, decidedly the best. In this department, we seek not novelty, but knowledge; and are content to forego the meed of admiration, where it is sufficient praise to be cogent. To us, in one respect, the evidences of the Bible, are, as its doctrines—not the less to be valued because they bear the impress of hoary age. We love to go back, even to the remotest times, to discover the evidences which support the fabric of our faith—the "glorious Gospel of the Grace of God." Though they may be presented in original combinations, we see at the present day no essential arguments for the faith which were not known and advanced ages since; which have not been repeated, in different forms,

through every succeeding generation, and we can divine no reason, except personal vanity, which can induce an author of our day to bring them forth as if they had never before been known to the world. From the occasional manner even of Dr. Keith, one might suppose that the arguments which we have been accustomed to regard as of ancient date, had just rewarded his patient and protracted research. Thus the argument, in favor of the authenticity of the Old Testament, drawn from the institutions and rites which were ordained to be observed in every generation as memorials of the wonders which the Lord wrought in Israel—from the significant names of Jewish persons and places, &c., is one of so much "novelty," to our author, that he actually pauses on this very account to apologize for "the tediousness with which it has been treated,"—p. 118.

In his "introduction," however, Dr. Keith disclaims all pretensions to originality, excepting as regards "the arrangement, combination, and connection of the evidence, the application of many of the facts on which it rests, the introduction of others, and the adoption and use of the arguments of our adversaries." Admitting, that in these respects, we may find "something new," for, perhaps, we have no right to expect any thing beyond this, at this late period of the world,—the disposition of the evidences does not appear to be so remarkably striking, nor the forms of his reasoning so powerfully conclusive.

We have neither the leisure nor the disposition to enter into an extended analysis of his plan; nor would it be particularly interesting to our readers; but in brief it is this:

1. A "demonstration" of the inspiration of the prophets by arranging in parallel columns, some of the prominent predictions of the Old Testament with the recent testimony of infidel and Christian travellers; something similar to which may be found in the place books of not a few theological students, though we presume their Professors would deem it hardly necessary for them to spend much time in proving that Volney was not an interested witness of the fulfilment of prophecy.

2. An appropriation of Hume's argument, which amounts to this, 1, That the Apostle Peter foretold, that "there should come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying;—(as Hume and La Place have virtually said by their argument against miracles from the continuance of the

laws of nature,) "where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;" which is a striking, though not an original application of the prediction. 2. That it has been proved by geologists that "the present state of the organic world has not gone on from all eternity, as some philosophers have maintained," and which the reader might have previously seen in Buckland's *Bridgewater Treatise*. And in the last place, that as prophecies, according to Hume's own definition, are real miracles, therefore we have had experience of the one as well as of the other; which argument, must be without force to the infidel, however plausible to our own minds, unless he be furnished with conclusive evidences, not merely, that these prophecies have been fulfilled, but that they were uttered hundreds or thousands of years before their fulfilment. Hume, of course, would not have given the definition, if he had thought ancient prophecies were susceptible of incontrovertible evidence. It is not enough to point to certain ruins in evidence of accomplished predictions, the great point to be established, is, the prior date and determinate application of the prophecy.

We are not satisfied, but that the geological argument against Hume's position is utterly inapplicable; for admitting the correctness of geological deductions respecting the comparatively recent origin of man, does it follow, that all things, have *not* continued as they were from the beginning of the creation? No sceptic will deny that in the first ages of the world, events might have been conducted by operative causes of a different nature from those which are now in action;—there is no unreasonableness in the supposition that this sort of agency continued in operation as long as it was required. The only question is, whether it continued to operate after the formation of a human creature? If it did not, then it was employed and continued only to effect the present physical and moral constitution of things.—The completion of this constitution of things, is that which sceptics, understand by the "beginning"—in other words, the establishment of that system of nature which from the remotest antiquity, has been uniformly governed by the inherent operation of general laws. And if so, then Hume's argument stands, notwithstanding Dr. Keith's boasted refutation. p. 69. The question, be it considered, is not

whether a succession of changes may not have taken place previous to the final order of creation, but whether any changes contrary to its uniform laws, have since occurred,—the sceptical argument resting exclusively, as we conceive, on the absolute inviolability of the known laws of nature. Because it can be proved by geology, that there was a period when man did not exist, because his formation from the dust may appear to us “the most astonishing miracle recorded in the whole compass of the sacred writings,” does it thence follow that experience is on the side of miracles? It is an argument against the eternity of matter, and an eternal series, but how it can confirm the credibility of the Christian miracles, we are at a loss to perceive. If the physical and moral constitution of things was completed at the close of the sixth day, no matter how many thousand of years might have been employed in its completion, then it may be presumed that all changes which have since occurred have been the result of general laws, and there arises from the uniformity of the laws of nature a presumption against the credibility of what is understood by miracles,” i. e. *a violation of the laws of nature*: Or, one may judge, as La Place says, “the weight of testimony necessary to prove a suspension of these laws.”

But though Dr. Keith has not satisfactorily answered the sceptical arguments arising from the probability of the continuance of the laws of nature, their fallacy might have been exposed in a few words. The argument of La Place as found in his *Theorie Analytique des Probabilités*, is this,—to give the reader a more definite idea of it, than may be derived from the work under review. “Events may be so extraordinary that they can hardly be established by any testimony. We would not give credit to a man who affirmed that he had seen an hundred dice thrown into the air, and fall on the same faces. If we ourselves had been spectators of such an event, we would not believe our own eyes, till we had scrupulously examined all the circumstances and assured ourselves that there was no trick nor deception. After such examination, we would not hesitate to admit it, notwithstanding its great improbability; and no one would have recourse to an inversion of the laws of vision, in order to account for it. This shows that the probability of the continuance of the laws of nature, is superior in our estimation, to every other evidence, and to that of historical facts the

best established. One may judge therefore, etc.—the remark as quoted above.

“Events may be so extraordinary that they can hardly be established by any testimony!” This is the very point in dispute, i. e. the credibility of testimony to extraordinary events. “We would not believe a man”—and who would? The testimony of one man is of course not sufficient; but might it not be established by a number of independent witnesses? This is the question.

But did he refer to the general belief of mankind? Then his statement is contradicted by the facts, for men in all ages have accredited extraordinary events on the ground of testimony which they conceived to be valid. And when he avers that he would not believe his own eyes, until he had assured himself there was no deception, he overlooks the fact that the ordinary laws of vision may be disturbed by physical causes, just as the evidence of testimony may be perverted by the moral repugnance of the mind to the thing testified.

As for the position of Hume, we are surprised that it should have been honored by so much notice. We can more readily account for the fact that it was approved by La Place, than that every one in succession who presumes to advocate Christianity, should deem it necessary to tax whatever powers of ingenuity he may possess to devise an answer.

No testimony can prevail against uniformity of experience. A puerile truism! Uniform experience must consist of the personal experience of every member of the human race, and is it to be expected, that any man can be found who will by his testimony contradict his own experience? But *experience* refers exclusively to the results of personal observation, and therefore, our knowledge of the experience of others must be derived from testimony; and confidence in uniform experience, is confidence in the credibility of testimony. Restricting the term experience to the only sense in which it can properly or justly be employed, Hume's celebrated argument may be seen in its true light;—*no testimony can prevail against uniformity of testimony!*

3. The antiquity and authenticity of the Old Testament, in four sections—in neither of which will the intelligent reader discover any thing with which he is not perfectly

familiar, excepting, perhaps, the manner in which the author attempts to substantiate the Mosaic record of creation by the observations of astronomy and the discoveries of geology. This is the only section of any decided interest in the work, and yet we have not so much confidence in modern science, particularly of such a science as geology,—not yet disengaged from its swaddling bands, as to be greatly concerned if we cannot reconcile its deductions with the details of the Mosaic account. Certainly, we have not as yet lost so much of our respect for the authority of Revelation, as to adopt in the interpretation of its meaning, or in explanation of its statements, a science, which is now advancing one hypothesis and then another, and each one in succession, with the same array of marvellous facts!—We think, that Dr. Keith in his desire to reconcile science with Revelation, may, in some instances, be regarded as visionary, or exposed to the charge of wresting Scripture; but to enter into particulars were to swell our remarks to a volume; and therefore we present the following extract, from which our readers will be enabled, in some degree, to form a judgment for themselves.

“Astronomers have written on ‘the Construction of the Heavens,’ ‘the Mechanism of the Heavens,’ ‘the Architecture of the Heavens,’ while geologists have described the successive formations in the crust of the earth. Moses records the creation of the heavens and the earth. Their conjoint subjects are the same as his.

“Astronomers have designated the first and rudest form in which matter is visible, as *nebulosities* and *nebulae*, i. e. *cloudiness* and *cloud*, and have termed their component substance the nebulous (or cloudy) fluid. And how else could *waters without form and void*, or vapoury and uncondensed, be more appropriately designated? The *nebulosities* are without form and *diffuse*, or void. And so also were the heavens and the earth, after their light rendered them visible. As exhibited by the great brightness in some parts, and extreme faintness in others, of the same *nebulosity*, the *light* may be seen *divided from the darkness*. And *there was evening and there was morning the first day*.

“Astronomers next speak of different forms of *nebulous expansion*. And in the same *nebulosity* may be seen the *division* into separate parts of the luminous fluid, or the breaking up of the whole amorphous or shapeless mass.

And there was an expansion, or firmament, in the midst of the heavens, and the waters were divided from the waters. And there was evening and there was morning the second day.

"The gradual condensation of the nebulae, as seen in every form, gives evidence of the recognised and universal law of gravitation; the centripetal (centre-seeking) force, as Sir Isaac Newton termed it. And the great modern master of the higher geometry, who has trod farthest in the path in which Newton first led, and who was so versant with the motions of the planets as to trace them by a profound sagacity to an origin befitting the majestic and divine simplicity of the laws which regulate them, has shown how, as affecting our globe and every other, *the waters were gathered together into one place*, and the earth was consolidated.

"And as *the dry land* appeared, the task of geologists begins. To the oldest of formations they have given the title (not undisputed) of primitive rock; and with the magic wand of truth they have brought back again, after the lapse of thousands of years, the springtime of our earth, and showed how it was clothed with the luxuriance and decked with the beauty of paradise itself. They more than restore *the grass, and the herb, and the fruit-tree*, which the fancy of man never thought of, and the eye of man never looked on as they grew. *And there was evening and there was morning the third day.*

"Geologists having shown us the beauty of the earth, while yet unblighted because of sin, astronomers invite us to look up again to the heavens and see how the nebulous fluid, gradually condensed to a far narrower space than the orbit of the earth, is consolidated into a *sun*, and, only slightly tintured with nebulosity, shines a *light* in the *firmament of heaven*; while, in like manner, La Place illustrates how the formation of the *moon* also was necessarily posterior to that of the earth. And, together with our sun, the other *stars* of our firmament were, by the operation of the same word of God or law of nature, simultaneously formed. *And there was evening and there was morning the fourth day.*

"Geologists again take up the task and tell of a time—the fifth day, defined like the rest by the succession of light and darkness, but else of undefined duration, and succeeding that of the origin of vegetables, and preceding that of terres-

trial animals, whether wild or domestic—when the waters were filled with living creatures, and the air tenanted with birds: and they bring forth from the depositories which the God of nature has formed, those amphibious animals, or race of marine saurians, which they also designate by the name which the original Scriptures assign them in their precise character, magnitude, multiplicity, and place. *And there was evening and there was morning the fifth day.*

“And, lastly, the tertiary or latest formations (except those of diluvial or more recent volcanic deposits) succeeding the age of reptiles, and preceding that of man, set forth finally to view the beasts of the earth, and the cattle, and every creeping thing after their genera or kinds, till the whole work of animal creation was finished. And by a separate and last act of creative power, magnified as such, the top-stone, once pointing to heaven, was formed and put over the whole earthly fabric; and the work of creation here below was crowned by that of man, when, though formed of the dust, the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. *And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning the sixth day.*

“Comparing these independent accounts, respectively written at the interval of three thousand years, and guaranteed by observations of the heavens and demonstrations in the earth, may we not conjoin the last verse of the first chapter of Genesis with the first verse of the second, and emphatically say, *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.* And whose word is this but that of their Creator?

“The stars of our firmament are indeed *a host*, of which a small part only is seen by the unaided human eye. Astronomers, so far as they can, have shown its form, so as best to accord with and explain the appearance of the heavens, as faintly represented in Plate VI. But He who from the beginning told man of their creation, can alone name them by their names, as he created them by his word, and brings them forth in their order. And from a diffused nebosity, waters without form and void, spread throughout an inconceivable immensity of space, to a numberless cluster of stars, as we read the word of God and look on the operation of his hands, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament

showeth his handiwork. But the law, also, of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the *testimony* of the Lord is *sure*, making wise the simple.

"The heavens are our witnesses; earth is full of our depositories; truth must spring up where the Creator hath sown it; and philosophers at last must be its tributaries. The Christian may well rejoice in the progress of science, and gladly give it a free and unfettered course. Knowledge shall be the stability of the times of the Messiah; and the mind of man, enlightened in the knowledge of the word and works of God, shall be freed from the nebosity which enshrouds it, and the light shall be divided from the darkness. And then shall the greatness of his works be seen, and the truth of his word be made manifest.

"But although, compared to that full flood of light, only the first flush of dawn may seem to be arising now over all the subject before us, whence, we ask, came this light, were it far fainter than it is? Is it not enough to scare away the children of darkness from the field which they have assumed as their own? What invention of man ever bore a similitude to truths ever previously unknown and only newly discovered, like that very record which skeptics have assailed? And how are all imaginative cosmogonies of former ages swallowed up by that of Moses, as were the rods of the Egyptian magicians by that of Aaron? Can our great calculators tell what is the *sum* of the improbabilities that such an analogy, if not founded on fact, would have subsisted or could be traced from first to last between the observations of Sir W. Herschel, the opinions of La Place, the accumulated and classified discoveries of geologists, and the short and simple record of Moses? Before Herschel handled a telescope, or La Place had studied the laws of planetary motion, or Cuvier had touched a fossil bone, what Vulcanist, or Neptunist (combating whether the crust of the earth was of aqueous or igneous origin) or other uninspired mortal, could have described the *order of succession*, in the creation of the heavens and of the earth, and marked in six successive periods the rank of each, in so close conformity with the recent discoveries both of astronomy and geology, when the name of science can be attached to these words, like the man who, three thousand years ago, could humanly know nothing of either from the mud of the Nile or from the sands of the desert? What man on earth, from the beginning of the cre-

ation, ever recorded its history with such conformity to existing observations and discoveries, as did He of whom the Scripture saith, *God made known his ways unto Moses*? And has not this word its visible illustration in the first page of the Pentateuch, as well as in every prophecy which he uttered?

"And may we not finally ask whether the testimony, borne by the fate of the Jews and by the desolation of Judea, that Moses was a prophet of the Highest, be not repeated by the record of the creation, and also, most slightly as we have glanced at either, by the whole Mosaic history and dispensation? In contending for the faith on any ground to which our adversaries bring us, it is not enough that our cause pass scatheless. When Nebuchadnezzar cast the faithful servants of the Lord into the seven-times heated fiery furnace because they would not worship a golden image, and when they came out uninjured by the fire that slew those who touched them, the king's word was indeed changed; and he blessed the God of Israel, and issued a decree that none should speak anything against their God, 'because there is no other God that could deliver after this sort.' And when the Scriptures come forth uninjured from the fire which slays those who touched them, may not the words of those be changed who speak against the Bible? may it not be received where before it was ridiculed, and be studied where formerly it was slighted? And may not every golden idol be abandoned for the worship and service of the Creator of heaven and of earth, as whose word the Bible is approved? not only because it has passed unhurt through the fiery ordeal to which the idolaters of blinded reason subjected it, but because it is thus manifest that no uninspired man could have written after this sort, as Moses wrote; and that no other God but the Lord by whom he spake created the heavens and the earth, as *it hath thus been told from the beginning*?"—pp. 144–8.

The remainder of the volume is devoted to an examination of the connection between the Old and New Testaments, as shown by the testimony of the prophets to the coming of a Messiah, and consequent expectation of his coming at the Christian era—followed by a comparison of the accounts of heathen writers with those of the Scriptures respecting the origin and progress of Christianity—with quotations from the New Testament by Christian writers—their testimony to the facts recorded in Scripture, and the confirmation of

their testimony by their sufferings and martyrdom ; all adduced in evidence of the genuineness of the New Testament Scriptures : then, the arguments which were adduced by Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, against Christianity, are turned in to actual proofs of the genuineness of the New Testament Scriptures ; afterwards, our attention is called to some remarks on the authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures ; and the volume closes with the testimony of the prophets respecting the Messiah, arranged in parallel columns, with corresponding passages from the evangelists.

But in these several chapters, we discover nothing more than a diffuse, and oft times confused repetition of some of the most common arguments for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. We see no indication of any thing beyond the most superficial research—nothing forcible which can be regarded as peculiar to the construction of the author's mind. For the imposing use which he has made of the arguments of the primitive sceptics, he is indebted to Lardner ; and, indeed, the chapter entitled an appropriation of the arguments of Celsus, is hardly more than a feeble comment on quotations from that erudite writer and invincible reasoner. But if, according to an old maxim which he has introduced in this chapter, *fas est ab hoste doceri*, of course, he is far from reprehensible for having availed himself of the teachings of a friend.

In short, it is a work which will neither repay the perusal of a learned man, nor be generally read with ease and profit ; though many may be attracted by its plates and parallelisms. To read Dr. Keith's pages, requires an effort of attention, and a greater effort seems to us to be necessary to remember his trains of thought. Not that his mind is profound, but because his style is so defective in all the constituents of good writing. There may be detected an unnecessary multiplicity of words to express a simple idea ; a want of unity in the construction of his sentences, and oft times a greater deficiency of judgment in the selection of only such points as are material to his object. Thoughts, also, are weakened by repetition ; the force of quotations is impaired by the prolixity of his remarks ; and the course of reasoning sometimes arrested by frivolous digressions. In a work, so entitled, as to lead us to anticipate an exhibition of close logic and terse expressions, we have been surprised to discover so many indications not only of a perverted

taste, but of a disposition to substitute cant for argument. There is an affectation, too, in his manner of writing which though, in some instances, it has affected us *ad nauseam*, we might pass without reprehension, were there not danger of its becoming a characteristic of modern literature.

We have made these remarks with reluctance, but from the following passages, selected at random, the critical reader may perceive that our strictures are not without foundation :—

“The truth of miracles must be tried by a test which nothing but miracles can abide, and which is fully competent to discriminate those works that are of God, and demonstrate the intervention of his power, from those which are of man, whether these be the delusions of wilful impostors, or originate in the reveries of misguided zealots. It is meet that there be a wide and clear separation and impassable barrier between any invention of an extravagant fancy or machination of a deceitful heart, between all that the art of man, by any possible combination or craftiness, could ever fabricate, the mind of man devise, the tongue of man tell, or the hands of man do, and the unerring counsel and holy purposes of an omniscient God, and the miraculous work of the hand of the Almighty. It is meet that, if the word be of God, the scriptural miracles should stand a test such as none but God could have supplied, such as should set at defiance all the fraud of mankind—seemingly boundless though it be—and mock the impious pretensions of daring and deceiving mortals, who would try to mimic the works of omnipotence, and say that their word was the word of God. It is meet that there should be the fullest security against the belief of false or pretended miracles, and that what the Lord hath wrought should be tried by a test which they never could abide.”—p. 75.

“The sophistry of Jesuitical extraction, which their vaunted argument displays, could gild a falsehood with a most deceptive plausibility, but could not disguise the inherent suspicion it betrays, that the testimony itself was not to be touched ; and, after its fallacy is seen, it is a tacit confession of the power of that very testimony, with which, being unable to grapple, the wily speculatists shrunk from the encounter. Evasion, which was their only wisdom, should have been their only boast. Unbelievers, in their fancied security and success, have not always proved aright

the quality of their boasting, nor of their 'great argument' of everlasting use. Retreat, though successful, is scarcely reputed as the choicest theme for glory or the first claim for triumph. But slight is the hope of safety when, instead of having escaped for ever from indomitable foes, the fugitives must stand before an unbroken army with banners. And never, in the contest for historical truth, was there ranged on the field of controversy such an impenetrable mass as 'the noble army of martyrs,' flanked on each side by captive enemies, the full force of whose testimony the evasive foes of Christian truth, when all ambush fails them, and when the phantom in which they trusted has vanished, have yet to encounter."—p. 114.

"The value of the arguments and objections of Celsus, in proving the antiquity and genuineness of the gospels, could not easily be overrated. 'It appears here with an untested evidence,' to use the words of Leland, 'by the testimony of one of the most malicious and virulent adversaries the Christian religion ever had, and who was also a man of considerable parts and learning, that the writings of the evangelists were extant in his time, which was in the next century to that in which the apostles lived; and that those accounts were written by Christ's own disciples, and, consequently, that they were written in the very age in which the facts there related were done, and when, therefore, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have convicted them of falsehood if they had not been true.' And, finally, to adopt also the words of Lardner, 'We have in Celsus, in a manner, the whole history of Jesus, as recorded in the gospels. For we have traced in him the history of our Lord's birth, life, preaching, miracles, death, and resurrection, all as taken by him from the writings of Christ's own disciples. We have seen many testimonies to the antiquity and genuineness of our Scriptures. It was quite beside the intention of the author that we should derive any advantage from his work, so that we may here apply the words of Samson's riddle or enigma, *out of the eater, or devourer, came meat, and out of the strong, or fierce, came sweetness.*'

"The solution as the origin of the riddle, in the first instance, was, that Samson, having turned aside to see the carcass of a lion, found in it honey, which he took and ate. More loathsome of themselves than a putrid carcass are many abominable things, engendered by the corruption of the

heart, which, from the beginning, have been uttered and written against that faith which alone can quicken those that are dead in trespasses and sins. But we may take of the honey without being tainted by the carcass; and we have found food out of the devourer, and sweetness out of the strong, to strengthen and refresh us in our progress, without turning aside from our path. Celsus was as a roaring lion in his day, as beseemed his calling. He boasted loudly, as if Christianity should have perished by his efforts, and as if he should thus have been the last, as he is the first, in order of anti-Christian authors. But long before his time it had been written in the Old Testament Scriptures, 'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.' Ps. viii. 2. And now, when pagan oracles have passed into oblivion, and when the books of the Jewish prophets and of the Christian Scriptures are every day held in the feeble hands of thousands and thousands of little children, strength is ordained to them to overmaster the enemies of our faith; and there is not one among them, if well versant in the Scriptures, who, from the facts on which the arguments and objections of the first great opponent of Christianity are founded, may not give a reason of his hope from the sufferings of Jesus, and a reason of his faith from the writings of the prophets, and in proof of a better strength than ever rested in an arm of flesh, still the enemy and the avenger, even by the words which he hath spoken. It needs not a Samson to approach the dead lion; and out of the carcass, where it could little have been looked for, a child may now take the honey and eat; and while he finds it safely preserved in the remains of an enemy, may relish the more the proof of the Messiahship of Jesus and of the genuineness of the Gospels, which, like the law of the Lord, are, to all who delight in them, sweeter than honey or the honeycomb." pp. 237-9.

"We wish not to state objections, even while adduced as proofs, without some slight hint at an answer, though we should thereby be drawn aside from the straight course, and the progress of our argument be seemingly suspended. And for the honor of our faith, and in the name of our country (though far from its shores as we write,) we may here, once again, pause for a moment to say that the Scottish nation is not numbered now among barbarous people, because, through

the blessing of God, Scotland is a land of Bibles, and that book is the rule of their faith, of which infidels have ever sought to deprive and to bereave them; that such in that land, though not straitened to it alone, but freely offered unto all, and experienced in many more, is the efficacy of the gospel of Jesus in elevating the intellect, even though high and vain imagination should be cast down; that there are thousands of her sons, so nurtured in the knowledge of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles, that, in defence of the gospel, they would not fear to cope with the ablest heathen that ever assailed our faith. And there is many a Scottish peasant who would question the wisdom no less than the humility of the man who turns the savour of life into the savour of death, and rejects Him who is the way, the truth, and the life, for the *reason* that God giveth not account of his matters unto him as he might think fit to require; and who, looking to Scripture, would here have a ready answer, that the Lord of all the earth will do right; that the times of ignorance which God winked at are past; and that, as they who have sinned without law shall perish without law, they who have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; and that, in the righteous judgments which he will execute upon all, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, and for the most barbarous people that ever dwelt on earth, than for those who bring upon themselves the greater condemnation of loving the darkness rather than the light."—p. 247.

"And looking singly to the exercise of his supernatural power, ministering to goodness no less divine, does not the life of Jesus, as penned by evangelists, rise in moral sublimity far beyond all the fancied actions of fabled deities, and show that he who was cradled in a manger and had not where to lay his head, was in a more glorious form than theirs the Son of God with power? Mercury, the winged messenger of the gods, could not anticipate the march of time, and tell of coming judgments. Nor could Argus, with his hundred eyes, look into the heart, perceive the thoughts, and tell what was in man. Neptune, riding on the stormy billow, must sink beneath his waves at the voice of Jesus, rising from his tranquil sleep in the tempest-tossed vessel, and saying to the stormy sea, Peace, be still. Jupiter, with his voice of thunder, could never speak to the conscience with half the efficacy which a word of

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Jesus gave to the crowing of a cock : nor could the unerring dart of Apollo pierce the soul like a glance of Jesus's eye, accompanied by so familiar a sound. Mars, the god of war, had neither the will, the courage, nor the power to resist his master, who is a murderer from the beginning : and his sword was but the badge of slavery to him, who fell like lightning from heaven at the word of Jesus, and to whom he said, while a hungered in the wilderness, Get thee behind me, Satan. The counsel of all heathen gods could not pass the decrees which came with effect in two words from the lips of Christ, Young man, arise ! Young maid, arise ! Lazarus, come forth ! and the dead arose, and the buried obeyed. Heathens could mould a statute in the human form, but they could not invest their gods with a divinity such as ever rested on Jesus, nor with all the powers of creative fancy, could they draw the likeness of one who, acting among men, could sustain the character of the Son of God, to whom every knee should bow. But there once were worshippers of the one living and true God, whose name was known and whose word was heard in Israel, that excelled in virtue the imaginary deities before whose images all men else were prostrated."

To have written a book of over three hundred closely printed pages, without having enlarged the bounds of knowledge, or added any thing important to the argument for Christianity, is bad enough ; but in this book-making age, we could overlook this, had the work been written in a style to correspond with its title. When intent on the evidences of revealed truth, we ask no declamation. With a question of such serious moment before us, our feelings as well as our judgment revolt from a play of words. To speak in this manner may captivate the throng ; but to write thus can only prejudice the mind of a literary sceptic.

Besides : there is a spirit of dogmatism and boasting and vituperation pervading some passages of this book, alike unworthy its author and his cause. There is no apology for dogmatism, where sound argument may be employed ; nor for boasting where our object should be truth and not victory ; much less for the use of opprobrious epithets, when the religion which we profess sanctions no weapons but those of meekness and love.

But these are by no means our chief objections. It appears to us that he rests his "Demonstration," in some re-

spects, on precarious grounds; and in general, on points subservient rather to the prominent evidences, than sufficient by themselves to induce conviction. His competency to the "Demonstration" of Christianity, may well be doubted, who can attach so much importance to theories which long before another age, may not only be displaced by some other discoveries, but respecting which scientific men themselves are even now divided—who triumphs by means which may shortly be employed to his defeat. Without attempting to demonstrate the truth of Christianity by its agreement with the latest scientific theory, all that is either necessary or safe, is, to show that the Bible is not at issue with the theory; or admitting that the deductions of science are true, that the Bible is not therefore in any respect falsified. The sceptic might readily amuse himself at his expense, who imagines, that he has established the Mosaic record by having evinced its agreement with the latest phase of science*—not so much on account of the mutability of human sciences, but because the record itself may be made to harmonize, apparently, with almost any theory. This peculiarity, arising from the manner in which the order and the events of the creation are couched, is higher evidence, we think, of its inspiration, than the "Demonstration," arising even from Herschel's observations. It intimates that it could not have been written by man; while it evinces the agency of superhuman wisdom.

From its disconnexion with discoveries which man might make, together with its entire freedom from all scientific or philosophic forms of language, deists have urged that it could not have been dictated by Him who knoweth all things; but a moment's reflection may satisfy any mind, that revelation and science could not have been conjoined, and must be distinct. The former is absolute and determined; the latter necessarily progressive—the one being designed to advance society by affording increasing exercise for the human faculties, the other to elevate us to the purity of hea-

* We recently heard a phrenological lecturer remark, that the science of phrenology was important chiefly as it tended to illustrate the fundamental truths of christianity; that some phrenologists were infidels, but his object was to shew the agreement between religion and the science.

ven by unfolding motives to the exercise of our moral affections. Whatever has a bearing on the interests and motives of human virtue has been fully revealed; but in its discoveries it goes not a step beyond the line of its immediate object. In relation to the creation, for example, it utters no gratuitous knowledge, nor wantonly stimulates curiosity. It communicates all that was necessary for us to know in order to accomplish the end of our being. Beyond this, it virtually answers us, as Raphael replied to Adam's inquiry respecting the rising "birth of nature from the unapparent deep," and "how first began this heaven which we behold."

"This also thy request, with caution asked
Obtain; though to recount Almighty works
What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend!
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve,
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing; such commission from above
I have received, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain
To ask; nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not revealed, which the invisible King
Only Omniscient, hath suppressed in night;
To none communicable in earth or heaven;
Enough is left besides to search and know."

Viewed as an argument for the old Testament Scriptures, it is not to be ranked, therefore, with such works as Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ* or Graveson the Pentateuch; while among recent works, either Wilson's *Lectures* or Gregory's *Letters*, appear to us much more calculated to impress the mind of a sceptic. The "demonstration," if we may apply to it the language of Burke, "is not armed at all points for battle, but dressed to visit those who are willing to give a peaceful entrance to the truth."

We believe, however, that Dr. Keith is the first who has ventured to assume the title which designates his work;—with what propriety we confess ourselves at a loss to conjecture. If the truth of Christianity be susceptible of demonstration, are we to believe that it was reserved for Dr. Keith to make it known to the world? But we have always been accustomed to think that historical facts or moral truths, could not be supported by demonstrative evidence, and that from the very nature of a revelation, the only evidence by which it could substantiate its claims, is that which arises from the soundness of testimony, and the strength of

probable inferences. True, our author adduces "existing facts;" but how are we to know that they are facts, unless we are satisfied with testimony, or admitting that we may satisfy our own eyes of the fulfilment of certain prophecies, yet we cannot ascertain that these prophecies were written at a very remote date, and by the very individuals whose names they bear, except through the medium of probable evidences. As well might we attempt to establish a mathematical proposition by moral reasoning, as to reduce the truth of Christianity to a mathematical demonstration. Its verity may be ascertained by the highest degree, (so to speak) of *moral* demonstration; but we like to have things called by their proper names; and the title of a book on such a subject as the evidences of Christianity, should not convey an erroneous impression.*

*For a specimen of reasoning worthy the name of moral demonstration, let the reader examine the following synopsis of a chapter taken from the first volume of Faber's Dissertation on the Credibility of the Pentateuch, and compare it with Dr. Keith's first chapter, as the point to be established is substantially the same in each.

"As the evidence of miracles is designed for a contemporary age, so the evidence of prophecy is designed for all succeeding ages. The nature of this evidence is such, as to be germinant, gaining instead of losing strength by the lapse of years.

I. The apparent and uninspired prescience of an able statesman can only reach a particular point; for he can do nothing more than argue from known causes to their probable effects

II. But the prophecies of Moses extend far beyond any such point; nor can their accomplishment be accounted for on the supposition, that he merely inferred certain effects from certain causes after the manner of an able politician.

1. A discussion of the prophecy that Israel should be characterised among the nations by dwelling alone or remaining unmixed.

2. Discussion of the prophecy that the Israelites should be deported from their own country into other lands,—that they should there become a proverb and a byword,—that their plagues should be of long continuance,—and that they should be universally recognized as divine judgments.

(1.) No human sagacity could have foretold such improbable events

(2.) Therefore Moses must have received the knowledge of them from inspiration.

But herein the writers of our day differ from those of the past. They left their arguments to speak for themselves;—we forestall, if possible, a favorable judgment. They relied on the merits of their works, but modern authors, in not a few instances, presume too much on the credulity of the public.

ART. VII.—LETTERS TO A SOUTHERNER.

LETTER I.

SIR,—My search has at last been successful. I have at length found one whose acquaintance with the New Theology qualifies him to be an able instructor and his zeal for its propagation, will no doubt make him a very interesting one. He lives on the most intimate terms with the New Haven Theologians, and report speaks of him as the author of some of the most powerful tracts in defence of the new Philosophy.

On my first opening to him the object of my errand, the good man's eyes fairly sparkled with pleasure. He most cheerfully tendered his services, and so confident is he of the weight and cogency of his arguments, that I have little doubt that he already counts on me as a convert. He informs me that a scholar of any ordinary capacity will acquire the New Theology in the course of a very few hours, and

3. A discussion of the prophecy, that the Israelites on their national return to the God of their fathers, shall be returned to their own land.

4. A discussion of the standing prophecy, involved in those sanctions of the law which presume the constant operation of an extraordinary Providence.

5. A discussion of the standing prophecy similarly involved in various positive institutes of Moses.

III. The inspiration of Moses may be proved, not only from his own accomplished and accomplishing predictions, but likewise from those of every subsequent prophet who recognised his divine commission."—*See Faber's Horæ Mosaica, Vol. 1, Chapt. VI.*

assures me that in three or four interviews at most, he will make me a perfect master of the great fundamental principles of their doctrine. I fear he counts too much upon my capacity, or upon the simplicity of his system, if I may make our first conversation a sample of what is to follow. However, nothing shall be wanting on my part, I shall attend on him whenever his professional duties leave him at leisure, and transmit to you an exact account of all that passes between us.

You would be delighted to witness this amiable man's enthusiasm on the subject of the New Theology; it is really worthy of a better cause. Upon my asking him in what books the new system was to be found, the good man hastened to his library (which stands in a small case of shelves) and brought forward eight or ten large cloth bound volumes, which I found to be the *Christian Spectator*, a theological periodical formerly published at New Haven. "Here," says he, laying them down on the table before us, "here I bring you truth itself embalmed; here you have the new theology in its purity, the clear first gush from the fountain head: here are the labours of those who have spent a life in separating truth from error, and presenting it without any foreign mixture. Here you have the very quintessence of reason—the pure essential oil of common sense." "But, Rev. sir," says I, "do all your followers receive this as the text book of the system?" "All our followers first obtained the system from this work; it is the very Koran of new theology. This is the very storehouse from which all our best writers have drawn their principles and arguments. It was here that the system was first unfolded to mankind.—This work has constantly circulated among our followers in every part of the Union. Our best divines in every section of the country have contributed to its pages, so that whatever principles you find advanced in this work, you may safely count on them as the principles of our whole party." "Now let me ask if you have ever taken the trouble to look into this work?" "I was obliged to confess I had not." "Indeed?" Nor Barnes's Notes? Indeed! Nor Stuart's Romans? Nor Finney's Sermons? Nor Beecher's Views." "Reverend sir, I must confess my ignorance, though I perceive you pity it." "Pity it! far from it! Pity it! it may sound strange to you, I envy it. Sir, you know not what a feast you have before you. Such another the world could

not furnish. You know not what light is soon to break in upon you. I protest that it is no small pleasure barely to recall the delightful emotions that these, our standard works, once awakened in my bosom."

"Now, sir, I will shew you the fundamental principle on which our whole system rests. Just please to answer me this simple question. Do you believe in the depravity of man, or the depravity of sin?" "In the depravity of man to be sure." I thought so. I thought so. The doctrine of physical depravity. You got it from your nurse and catechism. You believe that sinfulness is something that may be predicated of the sinner himself; an absolute blasphemy against human nature, and, what is more, against the God of nature. Yes sir, here is the great discovery of modern times. It has been found that sinfulness can belong to nothing but acts; that the sinner himself is not sinful and this simple disclosure has revolutionized theology and changed the face of the Church. I don't know where the opinion originated, but some how or other it got into universal currency, that sinfulness was something which might exist in man himself and belong to his nature, and the absurd dogma has produced infinite mischief both in religion and morals. Yes sir, the greatest part of sermons and books of devotion, for the last few centuries, have been little better than so many libels upon human nature. I am fairly astonished that mankind could ever have borne with such scoffs and blasphemies which now appear so shocking to pious ears. It has been absolutely demonstrated, sir, that sinfulness cannot belong to human nature—that it is as absurd to impute depravity to man himself as it would be to predicate weight of thought or roundness of the affections. In short, sinfulness may with as much propriety be attributed to the nature of holy angels or of God himself as of man and devils. We hold to the sinfulness of acts and of these alone; we grant that the acts of the extortioner, the thief or the murderer may be sinful, but to assert that these acts express any qualities of the agents themselves, this absolutely shocks us, we regard it as little short of blasphemy. Is not this a comfortable doctrine?" "I profess, sir, if it be true it is the most comfortable one I ever heard; why, to find that I myself am perfectly pure and free from all sinfulness, it is absolutely electrifying. Now inform me at once who has brought us

this glad tidings, who made the discovery?" "Our great Fumosus." "But was he the very first discoverer?" "We do not claim for him exactly the merit of being the first discoverer, but we boldly assert his originality in bringing this great truth to light. The fact is we have lately ascertained that the same great principle was discovered and ably unfolded by the eloquent Pelagius some centuries ago, but no one supposes that Fumosus was ever aware of this; and we have all agreed to concede to him the merit of entire originality." "And did Pelagius hold the very same sentiments?" "As nigh as words can express it. He denied that we inherit any sinfulness from Adam, or that there is any thing good or evil in man distinct from his actions. I give you his own words: 'All good or evil on account of which we are either praise or blameworthy *is acted by us*, not born with us; before the acting of his own will there is only that in man which God created.' There is no sinfulness before acts, but it is all placed in acts. It was on this foundation that he built his whole system, and if this be solid no man can prove but——" "But, Rev. sir, I thought you called yourself a Calvinist and held the doctrine of total depravity." "And so I do, and so do we all; we profess to acknowledge that all the acts of unconverted men are sinful; but then we hold it to be the very height of absurdity, on account of this uniform course of sin in the agent, to argue any sinfulness in his nature as its cause. Here, sir, we have found solid ground: we reconcile all difficulties on this vexed question; it removes all absurdity, and must satisfy every sceptical mind; we hold, sir, to the perfect purity of human nature, and the perfect sinfulness of all its acts. In short, we are so far Calvinists that we believe in the perfect purity of man, and the total depravity of sin. Do you see the distinction?" "Perfectly." "And is not here orthodoxy enough for any reasonable man?" "Rev. sir, I am no theologian and cannot pretend to be a judge in such nice matters; but is it to be expected that they who hold to the perfect purity of man will long believe in the entire depravity of his acts? Is it not to be feared that they who have ventured to deny original sin, will soon begin to explain away that which is actual?"

"You may be perfectly easy on that head: there is no imaginable connection between them. It has always been with me matter of absolute astonishment, that divines have

been so absurd as to infer any sinfulness in man's nature from the bare circumstance of the sinfulness of all his acts. I repeat it, there can be no imaginable connection between them. So far from producing mischievous results, the doctrine that all sinfulness exists in his acts and none in the man himself, has shed a flood of light through every department of theology and morals. In short, the blasphemous dogma of physical depravity, has been the grand obstacle to the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of the Church and all the most promising measures of moral reform."

"First, the pernicious imagination of Christians that they had certain corrupt principles within them which they must mortify, and with which they must maintain a constant warfare, not only shut them out from all true and solid comfort, but absolutely cut them off from all profitable employment. But now they have found that no sinful principles or propensities belong to their nature; instead of engaging in a suicidal warfare against their own natures, they find themselves quite at their leisure. In fact they have little else to do than to attend to the salvation of other people."

"Then, too, ministers, in their addresses to the unconverted, always proceeded upon the presumption that the sinner himself was sinful—and they pretended to convince him, that he ought to humble himself, abase *himself*, and ever abhor himself. Before they would believe that a man had truly repented, they must see him thoroughly humbled and abased on account of his past courses, and cordially abhorring them. They must see the man deeply and permanently affected with the error of his ways. This was just calculated to discourage and distress the sinner, and even drive them to despair. Very few could ever be persuaded to repent on these terms. But when the glad tidings came that human nature is not sinful, sinners began at once to hold up their heads. You cannot imagine the joy and docility with which men received the new philosophy. When we announced to them that all the passions and propensities of human nature were innocent, that pride, vanity, envy, covetousness, ambition, and revenge, were nothing but constitutional emotions, forsooth they were all attention, and the new doctrine wrought wonders. We found we had hit upon the true method of presenting truth to the mind so as to produce effect. We have seen extortioners, thieves, whoremongers, sots, and rascals repent with more

ease than ever they sinned, and without any remorse, shame, or abhorrence for their former courses, yet, and by a little persuasion, consent to come forward and profess themselves honest men, Christians, and great saints, and as such enter the Church, and take the lead in all its concerns."

"It is absolutely astonishing with what strength and courage the new doctrines supply our converts. You shall see a young man, with the most inveterate habits of lying, lewdness, or dishonesty, without any change in his views, or a moment's reflection on his evil courses, upon a sudden change of resolution or purpose, you shall see him start off on a course of piety with the speed and strength of a locomotive."

It is truly delightful to see how quickly this class of professors outstrip their brethren. I could instance some who have reached perfection, after a race of something less than two months. There are others, who, a short time ago, were wallowing in the streets, who without ever betraying the least remorse for their former vices are now deeply scandalized with the conduct of the Church, who have no scruples in denouncing whole sections of it as sinful, and to pour out their anathemas upon those who do not instantly withdraw from their communion."

"There was no such thing as doing much for the advancement of religion, while men were taught that there was something sinful in human nature itself. But, sir, as soon as people were once convinced that all the innate dispositions and passions of human nature were entirely innocent, as soon as the doctrine of physical depravity was fairly out of the way, immediately the proud, the covetous, the revengeful, the ambitious, and the envious, found very little difficulty in being pious. In truth, an evangelist of any tolerable skill in presenting the truth, thought it a bad evening's work if he did not bring some dozen, at least, to repentance, or, rather, to a change of purpose. It cannot indeed be called repentance according to the old meaning of the term: you don't see men at our meetings mourning over their evil courses, and loathing themselves as if there were something wrong *within* them: we hold this to be absolute folly and nonsense. No, sir, we regard it as the height of absurdity to suppose there can be any sinfulness in the sinner himself; as I said we freely admit the sinfulness of all his acts, but how this should lead any to infer any sinfulness

in the man himself, we have always been at a loss to divine. It is certainly both blasphemous and absurd."

"The truth is the old doctrine of original sin had well nigh ruined the community. It had become customary to consider liars, thieves, sots, and rascals as themselves depraved, a most discouraging doctrine, but, sir, as soon as the doctrine was broached that all sinfulness consists in acts, then men begin to look up; they begin to make nice distinctions, and are becoming acute theologians. But under the old doctrine that all sin and vice had its origin in the innate depravity of human nature, men were absolutely discouraged from all rational and effective schemes of reform. Now that we have got rid of original sin, we find that which is actual, a perfectly manageable affair.

"As soon as the new system was advanced, several very ingenious men in different parts of the country, saw at once to what glorious conclusions it conducted, and with this single principle have raised the most magnificent schemes of reform that the world has ever witnessed.

First, sir, it was soon inferred, that, as the faults of children and scholars do not originate in any badness in the individuals themselves, but are all to be traced to some other cause, (we cannot divine what,) it was inferred that nothing was wanted to keep them to their duty, but correct moral influence. In fact it is now considered a settled truth, that schools and families may be better governed by moral suasion than by the authority and arbitrary commands of parents and instructors. We have a pretty extensive sect, who consider schools and families as so many licensed despotisms in a free country, where the liberties of one half of the community are sacrificed to the will of a set of petty tyrants, and the friends of human rights are beginning to lift up their voices against this slavery at the north, and are stripping those wolves in sheep's clothing, who attempt to defend it by the sanction of the Bible.

"Then, sir, we have a class of acute metaphysicians, who are not afraid to press their abstract views of the dignity and capability of human nature to their true results: they are firmly persuaded that a nation had better be governed by sound reason than any form of polity yet discovered. Yes, there is coming forward a class of hopeful politicians, who look upon all government, civil and ecclesiastical, as an usurpation of the rights of man. They aim at

the extinction of all civil government as arbitrary and tyrannical, and are determined not to rest till they can free mankind from magistrates, and legislatures, and prisons, and place him under the mild sway of reason and conscience.

Another most promising society of philanthropists is just coming up, who have discovered that human society is sufficiently advanced for the removal of war. They think it capable of perfect demonstration, that a nation may be better defended by sound argument than by fleets and armies; and will satisfy any rational man that strong moral suasion ought to be of weight sufficient for the preservation of all our political and commercial interests with foreign nations. Yes, sir, let mankind but adopt correct views of human nature, and it is thought that nations will burn their ships, and forts, and arsenals, and trust for protection solely to each other's honesty, and love of justice, and moral rectitude.

"As soon as Fumosus had demonstrated that human nature itself could not, in the very nature of things, be sinful, you cannot imagine with what joy the news was received among all classes of sinners—what peace of mind was diffused through all the ranks of transgressors. It was at once hailed as the greatest and most practical discovery of modern times. Certain classes of sinners had before been much prone to dejection, and withal somewhat unpopular. The community had been accustomed to think that there was something peculiarly odious in the men themselves, but as soon as these persecuted people learned that a person's acts expressed no moral qualities of the agent himself, they began to form a more just and rational estimate of themselves.

"Just as soon as the silly notion that actual sin had its origin in some corruption of human nature was given up, we began to apply some rational means for its removal. It was found at once that nothing was wanting but to bring a wise and efficient system of measures and moral influences to bear upon men to make them virtuous and happy. Undoubtedly the grand obstacle to the general influence of the Gospel, was the old doctrine of physical depravity: but then there are certain great national sins which certainly darken the public conscience, and are a hindrance to the advancement of true religion. We already have two or

three tolerable promising societies for the suppression of individual sins, but we need a great organization for each of the ten commandments. A judicious division of labor is found to be attended with the happiest effects in morals; besides, the fable of the bundle of sticks is in point. Sins may be attacked singly with some hope, when there would be little prospect of success in assailing them in a body.— Let a wise system of moral influences be brought to bear on the community for a few years. Let the great national sins and prevailing vices be removed, and a few evangelists, who understand how to present truth to the mind, will carry all before them. This system has been tried long enough already to test its efficiency: it works to a charm. We have done wonders. While the old school doctrine, that sins and vices have their root in human nature continued, men could never be persuaded to attack them with any courage, but as soon as we put faith in the new demonstration, and took hold of them then in good earnest, they gave way at once, and came up almost without our pulling.”

“Take as an instance the sin of lewdness. It has ever prevailed more or less in society since we have known its history, but in large cities it has always found means to entrench itself so firmly, that all attempts to dislodge it entirely from its haunts were regarded as hopeless. But now it is considered something which children and women may cope with. A single she Hercules would make little of cleansing these Augean stables alone. A wonderful zeal on this subject has been spreading through the community since the ladies themselves have taken up the subject. They have become fully convinced in some places that they have been content to act too long on the defensive merely, and have begun to adopt most decisive measures for the reform of society. Where they have given the matter a thorough investigation, and got their feelings fairly alive on the subject, (I don't like to use such a word before a young man,) but I am persuaded that there the whoremasters are now more afraid of the women, than the women ever were of the whoremasters. In one of the villages of Massachusetts, if my memory serves me right, the young ladies have resolved that, if the young fellows don't mend their manners, to take them in hand themselves; and they have given them warning, that, in case they do, (I use their

own words,) 'they will not leave them so much as a fig-leaf to cover the nakedness of their moral deformity.'

"Now, sir, I wish to ask you, before I go any farther, whether you comprehend the distinctions which I have been making; in short, let me ask you, whether you have understood my meaning. It is pretended that there is no real difference between us and the old school; that it is a fine abstract subject of no practical importance in the world." "Rev. sir, I understand you perfectly; it is the most delightful and the most practical discovery that was ever made by man. What can be finer than to know, that our nature is perfectly sinless without any stain of depravity? It gives a man, too, a most exalted view of his powers over his vices if he have no inherent corruption. None but a pretty acute metaphysician can see why all his acts should be perfectly sinful rather than perfectly holy. Besides, how consoling it must be to worldly people, to know that ambition, envy, and avarice, which have always governed the world, and have been the source of almost all the crimes which have filled it with misery, how consoling must it be to know, that their ruling passions, which all admit to be innate, are made, by that very circumstance, perfectly innocent. The doctrine, too, must serve to promote general cheerfulness, by giving just ideas of sin. Many have formed such hideous notions of it as have driven them to despair; but when we come to view it as always the act of a pure, sinless nature, of a being not himself depraved, it must tend greatly to the quiet of uneasy consciences."

"But, my dear sir, it occurred to me while you were speaking, that if this be a doctrine which Fumosus found in the Bible, he deserves no credit at all for original discovery; and if it be not in the Bible we are afraid of it."—"Well, sir, he did not use the Bible at all. He did not attempt to prove the depravity of man scripturally false, but in the nature of things impossible.—Old divines, because, forsooth, that every individual of the human race, in all ages and nations, had done nothing but sin from the cradle to the grave, inferred that the cause must be some depravity in human nature itself; and then, by giving scripture a literal interpretation, they very comfortably made out the doctrine of original sin, or physical depravity. Fumosus struck at the very vitals of it; he just proved from reason that it was, in the very na-

ture of things, impossible, and left men to draw their own conclusions as to its truth or falsehood ; as to its being in the Bible or out of it."

"But, reverend sir, I don't doubt the ability of Fumusus to demonstrate that it is absurd to ascribe sinfulness to man as it would be to a stone, but yet language itself seems to be constructed on that theory ; for all men of all nations speak of him not only as the agent of sin, that is, as a sinner, but also as himself actually sinful. I have a great distrust for the demonstrations of reason. I want the authority of—" "Ah, I see where you are going ; the instant your party get into difficulty, you strike off to the Bible for help. Now, sir, you must understand we have stolen a march on you ; we have actually taken possession of your strong hold, and turned its guns against you. Our great Hermeneuticus, in his ingenious Commentary on Romans, has absolutely proved the fathers, the reformers, and the Church, in all ages, to be absolute novices in the Scriptures. In the opinion of some that are reckoned good judges, he has made St. Paul as pretty a Pelagian as you would wish to see." "But has Hermeneuticus absolutely cleared up all the difficult passages on this subject?" "He has not done all that we could wish to be sure, but yet, considering his circumstances, we cannot imagine how he could do as well as he has. The old idea of a professor's signing a creed as a condition of holding his salary and office, is happily going out of fashion. It was like hampering a man, and then requiring him to walk. A man who shall undertake to teach others, ought surely to be ready to learn himself ; he ought to have his reason wholly unshackled ; it should move with the slightest breath of evidence, and be carried about like a weathercock with every wind of doctrine. We regard the work on Romans, as fit only for babes in New Theology ; and for this reason, we have employed some of our best writers to prepare something which will suit the digestion of such as can bear strong meat. Hermeneuticus carried the principles of interpretation a good way, but he by no means brought them to perfection. Now, two of our able men have, by sound demonstration, settled a system of principles by which a person may go from one end of the Bible to the other with perfect safety, and never meet the doctrine of physical depravity, physical regeneration, effectual grace, and certain kindred notions, which have so long troubled the Church, and retarded the progress of piety." "But, Rev. sir, I design

to communicate the substance of our conversation to a friend. I know, indeed, from what I have seen in the books of these writers, that their great fundamental position is, 'that there can be no sin or *sinfulness*, except wrong voluntary action,' but I should be glad to have all their great principles in their own words." "Right! and that is just what I am designing to do. I have as yet but just described our great principle; shown that it is not a metaphysical subtlety, in which you could have no interest, but a practical truth, capable of being brought to bear upon almost every thing. I trust I have got you interested in the subject. I shall next give you our great principles of interpretation, which lay at the very foundation of our system in the words of our writers. In future you shall not complain for lack of quotations. But you have already heard, perhaps, as much as you will remember." Here our first interview closed, and here I close my letter.

LETTER II.

On the authority of the Bible in Theology.

At the commencement of our next interview, the good clergyman thus began:—"You have doubtless heard us 'accused of leaning to reason and philosophy, and of evincing a singular and unwarrantable degree of self confidence.' We are constantly taxed with setting up reason and philosophy above scripture. Now this we hold to be a wilful misrepresentation on the part of our adversaries. We have never dreamed of putting reason above revelation; we put them both exactly on the same level. We hold the true meaning of Scripture, providing we can come at it to be certain truth; and we also hold that the unbiassed decisions of reason in its own appropriate sphere are infallible truth. Now who would ever set up one infallible guide above another? Can these men prove that we have ever asserted that reason was more than infallible? if not, then let them acknowledge themselves base calumniators." "But, reverend sir, we grant that reason may be a very good and sufficient guide in the affairs of this life; as for instance, when we should plant or reap, or where a man had better vest his property. But you dont pretend surely that it can venture to speak on those subjects where a revelation was necessary to us, and on points upon which

an infallible God has already decided, and which he has forever set at rest." "There, I see you have the vulgar blasphemous notion of the weakness of human reason, from which our writers are happily delivering the Church. Now you must know that our great Pyrrho, in *Christian Spectator*, Vol. 9, p. 151, has composed a small tract on this very subject, 'On the authority of Reason in Theology,' and what do you suppose are his conclusions? He decides positively, page 151, 'That the clear unperverted deductions of reason, are as binding in their authority, and not less truly to be relied on, than the word of God.'

"But can it be that Pyrrho really means to assert that reason is an internal infallible revelation?" "Most assuredly, sir. I will give you his own words; he says, p. 151, that he coincides with those who 'have accustomed themselves to give heed to the voice of reason *as the voice of God*, and implicitly bowed to her authority; assured that while honestly employed upon subjects within her competency, she can never mislead or betray.' We regard reason as the voice of God, and we are absolutely shocked at the profane language of scoffers and blasphemers, who are perpetually declaiming against it. But, sir, you perceive that reason must be unbiassed, and act within its own sphere in order to be entitled to this high confidence." "Aye, that is the important question, more important than the point in theology upon which she is to give her opinion. Who is to determine, sir, when reason is competent and unbiassed?"—"Who? do you suppose a revelation is to be given on the subject? reason herself must decide and she is abundantly able, and our ingenious Duplex, before deciding a question in theology from reason, takes the precaution first to prove that it is one within the province of reason, and one in which she has no interest to sway her." "But Pyrrho cannot be bold enough to claim for reason the right to sit in judgment on questions which an infallible God has already settled. He cannot surely wish to give us to understand that the word of God relates to questions which reason is competent to settle—he must be speaking of certain curious questions which it is of no manner of consequence how they are determined; he cannot mean that reason is to discuss a question where the word of God has already given a decision; for that being infallible, any farther discussion must be unnecessary and even presumptuous." "There, sir, you are

mistaken. Pyrrho asserts that reason and revelation have equal authority in theology, and to demonstrate to you that he means that they may act on the same question, he adds, in the very next sentence, that the former can never contradict the latter. Does that satisfy your incredulity?" "But, Rev. sir, he surely could not pretend to extend this licence beyond some very easy questions. How far might we suppose it to extend?" "Well, sir, as far as any reasonable man could possibly wish. It extends to every subject in which man is responsible to God for his opinions. Here, as you are disposed to be so incredulous, I will give you Pyrrho's own words. In deciding the question, 'why God holds man responsible for his opinions,' he says, 'one and only one satisfactory answer can be given. It is and must be because he has, with his own hand, implanted in the breast of every subject of his righteous government a mind capable of arriving at truth, on all those questions in reference to which SUCH RESPONSIBILITY IS INVOLVED.' Is not here a field wide enough for reason to move in." "Certainly, I cannot for the life of me conceive how the most daring reason can wish for any farther licence. But allowing that reason were perfectly competent to discover all the truths of revelation, I cannot imagine why Pyrrho is so anxious to have it take up questions which have already been settled by the omniscient God. I cannot conceive how reason, with all its power, can give additional confirmation to what is already allowed to be unchangeable truth. His position, if true, seems to be entirely useless." "I thought so, I thought so. I meant to let you see you were in difficulty before I came to your help. You have not learned our great foundation principle of interpretation. This was laid down and demonstrated by our celebrated Duplex in a series of articles in the third and fourth volumes of the Christian Spectator. He is admitted to have settled these great principles, and for this reason Pyrrho has taken many things as granted, for the proof of which we must consult the writings of Duplex. He has done perhaps more than any single individual to bring the Bible over to our side." "Pray, sir, don't keep me long in suspense, I am impatient to learn the great principle of the system which is to free us from the discouraging doctrine that human nature itself is sinful. I am almost dying to know that all my sins are committed by a being of a nature without the slightest stain

of depravity." "Well, sir, if you must proceed so fast know then that Duplex lays it down as a principle that we must interpret the Bible by common sense." "I see; he means by this, not surely that we are to interpret it so as to agree with the dictates of common sense, but merely that its disclosures must be apprehended by common sense or by the human understanding, and not by some other means: he intends, that if we had no more understanding than the stones, we should be as ignorant as they are of the Bible. It cannot certainly cost him much time to prove so plain a proposition." "There you are altogether out; you must hear Duplex himself. He begins by laying it down as a truth that 'correct interpretation necessarily depends on a correct knowledge of things.'" "What, does he mean that it presupposes a knowledge of the very things revealed?" "Exactly so, for," he immediately adds, 'in every process of investigation into the meaning of language, the *ground-work* must consist of mental decisions concerning what is true or false, possible or impossible, as things are actually constituted.' " "And does he mean to assert that we must always give the Scripture a meaning consistent with what we already know to be true or false, possible or impossible?" "Exactly so, he adds, that among the many possible meanings we must be sure to select one which agrees with what we know to be true or false, possible or impossible. On page 138, Vol. 3, he says, 'Who does not go on the supposition that no sense of Scripture can be correct which is contrary to the known nature of things.' Don't you see that a person must know what is true or false, possible or impossible, on the subjects on which the Bible speaks from reason at the outset, otherwise he might adopt a meaning inconsistent with the nature of things, and you see he decides that no meaning of Scripture can be correct which is contrary to the known nature of things. Do you see now why we take so much pains to prove reason infallible and that it can decide on points decided by the Bible?" "Perfectly. But, Rev. sir, if things be so, instead of the Bible being on an equal footing with reason, what you call competent unbiassed reason, is our only guide, and gives the only knowledge upon which we can depend. Common sense becomes an infallible and final umpire, and instead of appealing from her decisions to the Bible, we must always interpret the Bible by her decisions."

"Admirable, charming, you see the bearing of our reasonings at once. You have hit on almost the very words of the ingenious Duplex, where he decides what is the final umpire of truth and error. Only hear him:—'There is therefore, if these things be true, a kind of knowledge to be depended on, consisting in the uniform decisions of the competent unperverted reason or common sense of mankind. From these decisions, understood as we have now explained them, we confidently maintain there is no appeal.—*Common sense is the INFALLIBLE UMPIRE and of right ought to be considered as the FINAL one in all cases where it is competent to sit in judgment.* If its decisions are not final, we ask whither shall we resort? Is it said 'to the law and to the testimony?' But how are we to determine what the law and testimony mean, except by this same common sense?' Ch. Spec., Vol. 3, p. 136. Do see how plainly he lays it down, that the decisions of common sense are the only knowledge to be depended on; that these decisions are final; that there is no appeal from them, not even to the Bible? Do you see how he anticipates and answers the protest of those who are for appealing to the Bible? Is it said to the law and to the testimony, says Duplex? But the law and testimony must be explained agreeably to the decisions of common sense and no interpretation received, which militates against these decisions. So that the Bible, and the decisions of common sense become one and the same thing, and there is no such thing possible as any appeal from common sense."

"Sir, you shock me. Can it be that Duplex has the hypocrisy to profess Christianity? I had understood that the conductors of the work which you have been quoting, professed to be religious men; that they had the charge of the education of youth in one of your first seminaries, and that some of them were employed to prepare young men for the sacred desk. How dare they then give currency to such infidelity? If Hume and other infidels could have descended to such stratagems, or expected success in them, without parting with one of their sentiments, or embracing one from the Scriptures, they might have become great divines, and even fathers in the Church. Would they have asked more than to have it granted, that human reason is the infallible revelation, from whose decisions there is no appeal. Did they ever claim any more than that the instructions of the

Bible should be brought before the bar of human reason, and received or rejected according as they agreed with or opposed what are called the dictates of common sense?"

"Pretty well, sir. I thought how it would be. You were for hurrying; you were dying to reach conclusions; you would take a shorter cut. There is no royal road to theology. This world was not made in a day; nor in a million ages, if we may believe its best modern historians. I foresaw it. You were shocked, as every one else is with the first statement of our opinions, where they are broached imprudently. We always take care to initiate our disciples into the higher truths of divinity, by a regular series of preparatory steps. Come, sir, you must go back and go round by the usual road. I intend to prove to you from our authors, that reason is the only tribunal in matters of theology: and what is more, the only possible one. But I had scarcely begun my work before you must interrupt me with your moralizing. If you intend to have me for your guide, you must put yourself entirely under my conduct." Here I begged the good clergyman's pardon for having so unseasonably interrupted his instructions, and he proceeded.

"I am now coming to a curious question decided by Pyrrho, when the Bible and reason appear to be opposed to each other. It is an imaginary case, which, he tells us, can never occur, and you readily perceive that he is right; for God and human reason, being both infallible, can never give contradictory decisions. He only supposes the case, and asks in this dilemma what is the person to do? 'Cling to his theology, and reject his reason, or abandoning his theology abide by his reason?' Pyrrho laments that 'the disciple of Christianity, pressed with this difficulty, has, but too often, felt himself compelled to answer that, in such cases, reason must be discarded.'" "But, reverend sir, I cannot imagine how there can be any comparison as to the certainty of the decisions of God and those of man in theology. God has existed and known from all eternity, has created all that exists—has given to every thing created all its properties and qualities—has prescribed immutable laws, according to which all things move and act: his understanding is infinite. God is the author of human reason: he has bestowed the limited powers ——" "You will excuse me, my young friend, but our time is precious, and your argument has no possible bearing upon the point in debate.

We are ready to place the declarations of God on a perfect level with the decisions of human reason ; and that is all that can possibly be claimed for them, for it makes them absolutely infallible. We admit that the Bible itself, in its true meaning, is perfect truth. If we could be sure that we had its true meaning, we would be far from ever disputing it. But do you not perceive that divine truth comes to us through the obscure medium of language, so that we may always be permitted to doubt whether we have it or not. The Socinians, by the help of various readings, interpolations, and the obscurity of language generally manage to elude their adversaries, without ever calling in question the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures, which, it is well known, they deny. They make a very ingenious and very proper distinction, which we have agreed to adopt. They believe, not that the Bible is a revelation, but that it contains one. Do you see the distinction?" "I see it plainly ; it is this : the Bible is a revelation from God, and undoubtedly true ; but then it is conveyed to us through so obscure a medium, that we actually need another revelation to know what it is." Exactly, exactly ; and that other revelation is reason, an internal one, which is always at hand—has no interpolations, no various readings, no oriental figures, nor any thing of the kind. Now can you see any reason for proving the impartial competent decisions of common sense to be infallible ? The fact is, we could not make the Bible infallible on any other plan. But now we have its true meaning given to us by an infallible interpreter." "But pray to what extent does Pyrrho carry the obscurity of the Bible?" "He supposes that we are just as liable to error in finding what the decision of the Bible is, on a given subject, as in deciding it ourselves."—"So that a man might as well investigate the subject himself, so far as truth is concerned, as to consult the Bible, is that his meaning?" "Exactly ; hear his own words.—Speaking of the case where the individual finds common sense and the Bible giving opposite decisions, he says : 'for although there is error somewhere, it is as possible that it may lie in his interpretation, *which, as we have said, is only one process of reason*, as that it is chargeable upon the deductions of his philosophy, another process of reason.'—Do you see now that, even if we consider the decision of reason as more probable than that of revelation, it is not

setting up reason against revelation, but only giving the result of one process of reason the preference to another. Pyrrho saw this perfectly, for he says that as long as a man hesitates between common sense and the Bible, or, to use his own words, '*so long as reason is at variance with herself*,' he can believe nothing. So you see let a person decide for or against the Bible, he is only deciding against his own reason after all; and I hope in this free country that reason may be permitted to decide against herself, without being taxed with presumption. Did not I tell you that it could be proved that common sense was the only umpire; the final tribunal of truth and error, from whose decisions there is no appeal. We grant that truth is contained in the Bible, which is as truly infallible as the unperverted dictates of competent common sense; but it is concealed under a veil—it is conveyed through the obscure medium of language, so that what we are apt to call scriptural truth is as truly the result of a process of reason as the conclusions of common sense, and equally liable to be erroneous."

"But, reverend sir, I had always understood language to be the vehicle for conveyance of thought, and not a veil to conceal it. I had supposed it the only medium for the communication of thoughts, and a very good one. I had believed that God holds man responsible for his belief in all the truths of theology, because he has revealed them through the only possible medium, that of intelligible language, and not as Pyrrho asserts, because he has implanted in him a reason capable of discovering them without revelation. I have been accustomed to consider language as a set of arbitrary signs, which have a precise and determinate meaning of themselves without any will or effort of ours. You and I have been interchanging thoughts for some time through this obscure medium, and I think without any misunderstanding; and I believe that a tolerable reader in any ordinary book finds that the words instantly suggest to him the meaning of the writer without any effort on his part, and even in spite of himself, and they do it as readily as the letters suggest the words. I had always supposed that a tolerable writer not only left his true meaning clear, but that the rules of good composition required him, so to express himself as to cut off even the possibility that any other meaning should be affixed to his words without doing them manifest violence. I should

hope therefore that there could be no just ground for the charge of obscurity in a book of which God himself is the author. I should think it far less presumption in an ignorant rustic to complain of the manner in which Sir Isaac Newton has expressed himself on the subject of fluxions, than to complain of the language of the Bible. Besides, in the one case the subject is really within the province of his reason, when that reason shall have been sufficiently cultivated, but in the other infinitely beyond it, after the highest culture. If, after patient and prayerful study of the words in any part of revelation, we feel doubtful as to their meaning, it must be our duty to bow in submission and wait for further light on the subject."

"Fine words, sir, fine words. Now let me tell you they have nothing to do with the subject: you have been shooting into the air. Know then, sir, that we never allow ourselves to complain of those passages which have generally been acknowledged to have some obscurity about them. It is only of certain ones, which appear perfectly plain, where the Bible appears to teach what is evidently contrary to reason; and here we contend for a little license, and insist that we must interpret it so as to agree with the dictates of reason." "But let me ask, would you insist on interpreting Lucretius, Plato, Cicero, or Hume, in such a manner as to make all their assertions consistent with reason. Would it not be called manifest violence and injustice towards them; how then can you presume to take more liberty with the writings of God, than you would venture with those of man. Besides, you destroy the very possibility of any internal evidence in favor of Christianity. The Bible, on this principle, can have no fixed meaning, but must always be precisely what any individual pleases to make of it. Pray tell me are you really afraid lest the Bible should teach glaring absurdities? And is this the foundation of the new rules of interpretation?"—"Precisely, so. It is in vain to deny it. There are passages in the Bible which seem most palpably to contradict the plainest decisions of reason. For instance: the doctrines of physical depravity and efficacious grace have always been considered by a large class of the community, as perfect absurdities; and yet they were received in the Church with little interruption till the time of Fumosis.—Now, sir, it is simply our pretending to find such doc-

trines as these in the Bible, which makes infidels. I am fully persuaded that nine-tenths of the infidels, who are really such, upon any examination of their own, have become so by these same doctrines, viz., that we inherit sinful affections; and that grace implants those which are directly opposite to the former. Had any one understood the new theory of Duplex, these men might have been saved to the Church. By the simple rules which he has discovered, the whole body of our followers are able to reject and vilify these doctrines with as much zeal as the infidels themselves, and yet maintain the reputation of good Christians and friends to evangelical religion." "I perceive that the great object of Duplex, in constructing his rules of interpretation was to prevent the Bible from teaching gross and dangerous absurdities, which it seems that it has always had the misfortune to do; but, reverend sir, I see that it applies only to those cases where the natural meaning seems to oppose common sense, and a forced one to accord with it. For he surely cannot have provided for the case where the most natural meaning is accordant with reason and a possible one opposed to it. Now, I should feel safer in trusting to the most natural meaning of a passage, i. e. the one which had most evidence of being the very word of God, than one which should best harmonise with my weak reason. But you are aware that these doctrines of which we have been speaking, are built on a great many passages." "True, but no sooner had Duplex discovered his rules, than he found that they gave a satisfactory explanation of them all. It drove the absurdities out of the Bible at once."

"But, sir, does Duplex believe that any of the subjects discussed in the Bible are above the unassisted powers of man to reason upon." "A few, but of no serious importance to us; but why do you ask the question?" "I was thinking here was a case where the rule would not apply." Ha! sir, there you are mistaken, for he says, speaking of the dictates of common sense, vol. 3, p. 143, 'that the Scriptures can never teach any thing positively inconsistent with them, even on those subjects which lie beyond the reach of unassisted reason.' "Well, sir, now I think of a case which I am persuaded admits of no remedy whatever. Duplex cannot expect always to be fortunate enough to find that an absurd passage is also ambiguous enough to

admit of two meanings; what, sir, is to be done in that case?" "Ah, sir, Duplex is too old for you, he has anticipated the very case, Vol. 4. p. 502, he says, 'Or if a passage will bear of but one interpretation and that one contrary to a known and well tried deduction of right reason—is it possible that any purely historical evidence in favor of its being from God, should be equal to the evidence of such a contrariety against it?' " "And what does Duplex say must be done with the refractory passage?" "What could be done with it? He decides peremptorily, Vol. 3, p. 144, 'that no passage to which a fair interpretation assigns a meaning known to be false can be part of divine revelation.' " "Duplex is really very kind. I regard this as decidedly the better rule of the two, it saves so much trouble. Instead of searching about as Duplex advises among the possible meanings of a passage, for the most decent one, it appears to me, that where a passage is found on a *fair interpretation* to teach what is plainly contrary to reason, it would save time to decide at once, that it could not be a part of the word of God. There is a large class of my acquaintance, and I think a large portion of the community who are now determined infidels, that I am sure would be easily brought over by this simple concession. They very well know that infidelity is unfashionable and in many places decidedly unpopular, but still they find some of the doctrines and so great a part of the precepts of the Bible going point blank against the revelation that God is making within them, that they have felt themselves obliged in this dilemma from a regard to the authority of God to give up that revelation which rests solely on external testimony and cleave to that which they know comes from him, which he constantly maintains within them. But, sir, could they but hear Duplex's rule of interpretation, they would be willing certainly to profess their belief in the Bible so far as it agrees with their competent unbiassed reason; indeed the good men do this already; but they would be willing to come out and do this publicly and even come into the Church if it were requested. But, Rev. sir, if every man were permitted to explain away or cut out of the Bible every doctrine and duty which on a fair interpretation seemed contrary to his reason I fear that very soon there would not be much of it left. I hope it is not in this sense that the adherents of Fumous generally profess Christianity." "But you don't understand an important distinction of Duplex. We do not expunge any thing from

revelation itself, since nothing contrary to reason can be long to it, but only from *our views* of revelation. Hear Duplex himself: 'Are those principles then erroneous which lead us to expunge from *our views* of revelation, and not from revelation itself, whatever theories, speculations, philosophy, &c., we may have imbibed, and which can be *proved* to be inconsistent with right reason and common sense?' Do you see it is not the Bible, but only theories and speculations, if anything be found in the word of God contrary to common sense?"

"But really Rev. sir, I have always had more distrust of that reason which Duplex allows to torture and mutilate the Bible at this rate, than even of revelation itself. First, I supposed it under the dominion of a corrupt heart, and that the sinfulness of our hearts is the source of more error than the weakness of our reason. I had supposed, too, that its powers were very limited, and that, on the high questions of which the Bible treats, it would be presumption for reason to form conclusions even if God had not decided them. Besides, even on the subjects which all allow to be within the lawful province of reason, what discordance of opinions amongst men. What endless errors arise from mere inaccuracy in using or defining terms; how many from a hasty assumption of premises; how many from unskilfulness, haste, or recklessness in drawing conclusions. There is an endless variety of opinions on the plainest subjects.—Few persons can be found to harmonize on a great many questions, even those which they are competent to decide, and the same individual at different periods differs from himself. Now it appears to me, that even if human reason were qualified to discuss these great subjects, yet that after all, it would be impossible for persons of the very best intentions to reduce the Bible to any tolerable agreement with a standard which is so much at variance with itself.—I really believe that it would be easier for men in general, considering how little leisure they have to give to exegetical inquiries, I verily believe it would be easier for them to adopt the old principle and bring their reason to agree with the Bible, than to search about for interpretations which would make the Bible harmonize with reason: unless they take the second rule of Duplex and exclude every thing from the Bible which does not agree with God's internal revelation."

"But my dear young friend, on questions of such moment we don't consult our ease, we look only to safety. Once admit that the literal meaning of the Bible cannot be absurd, and in come the doctrines of physical depravity, physical regeneration, physical holiness, and even the real presence. Only hear Duplex, Ch. Spec. Vol. 3, p. 119, 'Thus a belief in physical depravity flows naturally and necessarily from admitting that it is consistent with philosophy, and from adopting *the literal mode of interpretation*.' Then, too, Duplex perfectly agrees with Dr. Channing that there is no way of keeping out the doctrine of the real presence except interpreting the Bible according to reason : in fact they both make this the fundamental argument in favor of rational interpretation." "But Dr. Channing was not serious in urging that argument ; he well knew its weakness and that it was not the true reason why Unitarians adopted the rational in preference to the literal mode of interpretation : he knew that the Socinians denied the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures and could remove the doctrine of the real presence in almost any way they pleased. I wonder that Duplex ventured 'to build on another man's foundation' without giving any hint of it, and especially that he should have gone the same way to support the evangelical system which Dr. Channing took to undermine it. But it is only on occasions where the natural and literal sense of the Bible, and not some forced or possible meaning, is absurd, that common sense is permitted to interfere and set it right. Is it not so?" "Exactly. Duplex would never have spent much time to prove that the natural and literal meaning of a passage, when rational, is to be preferred to a possible one which is at once forced and absurd."

"Then I perfectly comprehend why Duplex and Pyrrho are at such pains to prove the unperturbed dictates of competent reason to be infallible. If the natural and literal meaning of the Bible may often be absurd, a man would be in constant danger of absurdity did he not previously know what is agreeable and what contrary to the real nature of things ; when to receive and when to reject the natural and literal meaning. But does Duplex pretend to prove that reason can always tell whether the literal meaning of a passage be absurd or otherwise?" "Certainly ; he says, Ch. Spec. Vol. 3, p. 138, 'Who does not go on the supposition that no sense of scripture can be correct which

is contrary to the known nature of things?" "I see; but this is only saying we may reject what is contrary to the known nature of things, without saying we can know when it is so. Does he say that we, ourselves, *can always know* whether it possesses this agreement or discrepancy?"—"Why be so suspicious? what you ask is implied in what Duplex said—but to remove all suspicion, after saying, 'Who does not go upon the supposition that no sense of scripture can be correct which is contrary to the known nature of things?' he immediately adds, 'and that *he is competent* to discern the agreement or discrepancy of a given meaning with the truths or realities designated by that phrase?' Is not this saying we can know when a meaning is contrary to the nature of things or absurd? Did not I tell you at the outset that we could not proceed at all in the Bible without an infallible reason to inform us when its declarations are agreeable to the nature of things or otherwise, when true and when false. Hear Duplex again, Ch. Spec. Vol. 3, p. 455. He is about to tell the reason why we give to a passage either a literal or a figurative meaning. 'We interpret certain declarations alike figuratively, or alike literally, because other previously known TRUTH requires us to do so.' Do you hear that?" "Yes, but he meant that other *scripture* truth determines the interpretation." "No such thing, for he immediately explains what truth he means. He says, 'and that truth is established by observations which our own reason makes upon the nature and relation of things.'" "But he could not pretend that such a rule was of any frequent application." "There you are mistaken, for he immediately adds, 'It is upon this *solid ground*, too, that *every principle* of interpretation which *is of any value* must be built,' and a sentence or two after, 'It is upon this ground and *only* this that we reject the doctrine of the real presence.'" "Rev. sir, the Bible assures us that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness and absurdity to him. I am ready to admit that the spirit of man may know the things of a man, but as for the things of God we have his word for it that no man knoweth them but the Spirit of God. But according to Duplex' doctrine man is able perfectly to fathom the mind of God; he must be able to know all that he can teach and all that he cannot teach before he opens his Bible, and then may

apply the ordinary rules of interpretation to find what he does teach." "Bless me, young man, you have hit almost the very words of Duplex, Ch. Spec. Vol. 3, p. 117, 'Those who think alike and correctly respecting, first, *what can and what cannot* be the true meaning of the divine word, (*and the human understanding we believe is competent to decide on this point,*) and who, secondly, apply the right method of ascertaining what the meaning really is, will doubtless mainly coincide in their conclusions.' But here we make a nice distinction. Duplex acknowledges that if we proceed upon the principle 'of making every thing suit the theology or philosophy of a party we should be reminded that this is not interpreting scripture. It is making it.'" "I see, he would have each individual interpret it so as to suit his own philosophy; he would have him act independently of his party." "But he does not allow one 'to open the sacred volume with a previous wish or determination to find in it a given doctrine;' he says however, 'to enter on the study of it *with settled views of the proper mode of ascertaining its meaning, and of what is true or false in the nature of things,*' is quite allowable." "I see; but if a man already knows what is true or false in the nature of things, it would be very natural for him to endeavor to make the Bible orthodox on these subjects. But as Duplex decides that human reason is sufficient to determine what the Bible *can* and what it *cannot* teach, it certainly has peculiar facilities for knowing what it *does* teach. For instance, he who already knows from reason what doctrines the Bible *cannot* teach, would perhaps be able to guess that these are the ones which it *does not teach*, and so we might say of the doctrines which reason informs us that the Bible can teach. But the latter part of Duplex's rule is sufficient for all practical purposes. The infidel and latitudinarian do not go to the Bible to find that certain doctrines *are* there, but to find that certain others are not there. But if his reason can satisfy him that they are false without going to the Bible he would hardly be at pains to consult it." "I see perfectly you will not give up your scepticism till you learn our doctrine of reason and common sense. Pray what opinion have you of common sense?" "Well, sir, I regard it as certain first principles and maxims which have commended themselves to the reason of ordinary men in

all ages and nations. As for instance, that a knave is not to be trusted, nor a liar to be believed, that our senses give us the truth, that young men bred up to concealment, equivocation, and deception, will by a little practice, become skilful in their calling; that it is farther round than across; that a faction which has stolen the creed of another denomination, would make no scruple to run off with their property; also, that honesty is the best policy, &c." "Well, sir, you have not hit our definition. You acknowledge we could know nothing of the external world without our senses: that they tell us the truth." "Yes." "You acknowledge that conscience itself, so far as we listen to it, tells the truth, that is, it never condemns a man for his virtue." "Certainly." "You will allow that if a man will not believe his senses and faculties, that there is nothing for him to trust to." "Certainly." "Well, what if common sense be a faculty of the mind itself, given to us by God, that we may know the reality of things, and especially those of the moral world, just as the senses inform us of the existence and qualities of the material world, must it not be implicitly believed?" "Certainly." "Well, sir, this is our doctrine. Here I wish your attention. This is the turning point of the whole matter. Listen then to Duplex, Ch. Spec. Vol. 3, p. 137, 'must we not admit that the unbiassed decisions of this *faculty of reason or common sense*, which He himself gave us that we might *see things as they really are and act accordingly*, must we not unavoidably admit that the decisions of this faculty are INFALLIBLE TRUTH.' Again, Ch. Spectator, Vol. 4, p. 500: 'It is in fact one and the same faculty that furnishes us with our common sense, *or is common sense itself*, and that enables us to come to the most distant and difficult conclusions.' God then can no more teach us falsehood by the faculty of common sense, than by the senses, or memory, or conscience." "But how far will this faculty carry us safely?" "Has not Duplex just said, to the most difficult and distant conclusions? Hear him again, Vol. 4, p. 664: 'Now will any man show us that there is not, and cannot be a philosophy conversant with the reasons of things in the moral world which shall also be as correct, and as easily proved so as the Copernican system?'" "But, reverend sir, would this faculty give us all needed truth?" "Certainly, for Duplex says, Vol. 4, 498, speaking of the limits of reason, 'that beyond

them it would be of no practical benefit if we could go.' "But would this infallible faculty carry us over the whole ground traversed by the Bible?" "That is somewhat uncertain, but Duplex says, *Ch. Spec.*, Vol. 4, p. 499, 'No one has ever defined reason so that its decisions could with propriety be maintained to cover the whole ground over which God MAY lead us in a revelation.' You observe he does not say over which he DOES lead us, but only that over which he MAY lead us." "Rev. sir, I see how much superior our fortune is to that of the Catholics who cannot trust the simple plain meaning of the Bible with the common people at all; but we need be at no loss when the Bible appears to teach an absurdity. We need not go to the decision of a Pope or council, but can appeal to an infallible revelation within. If what Duplex says be true as to the extent of the province of reason, the external revelation seems to be of little use but to be corrected by the internal one." "I knew you would come into our views.—Now, sir, I wish to examine you and see how much you have learned. I wish to know whether you understand the system well enough to apply it to any practical purpose. What would you do sir, were you required to decide on the truth or falsity of a certain doctrine, for instance that of physical depravity?" "Well, sir, I would first find out, by the decision of competent unperverted common sense on the subject, whether the doctrine were true or false. When this had been done, I should proceed to get the decision of the Bible on the matter." "My heart! I am astonished! Young man, you have answered almost in the very words of Duplex; he says, *Christian Spectator*, Vol. 3, p. 465, 'It is then plainly the decision of competent unperverted common sense, that the doctrine of physical depravity is false, and that all sin consists in voluntary action. The latter then is the TRUTH. We now proceed to ascertain the decision of the Bible on this subject.' He has done the same with quite a number of doctrines; first decided whether they were true or possible, and then brought the rules of exegesis to bear upon them to determine whether they were true by the Bible. Now, sir, that you have mastered our system on the authority of the Scriptures, you are prepared to take up the doctrines of physical depravity or original sin, human ability, efficacious grace, the law of God, and kindred matters, which will be the subject of

our succeeding conversations." "But, reverend sir, since common sense so readily removes these doctrines from the Bible, I have been thinking what a thousand pities it was that the Reformers had not possessed common sense, and then they would have removed them when they rooted out other corruptions." How came these men, who have always been reckoned at least to have had common sense, to receive such absurdities?" "Well, sir, Duplex will give the answer, *Christian Spectator*, vol. 4, p. 663, 'In a similar manner the divines of the Reformation first made out their philosophy, and that too a closet philosophy, and then interpreted the Scriptures to accord with the views thus erroneously formed. That the philosophy of theology, at the period to which we refer, originated in the manner now described, is susceptible of overwhelming proof.'—"But pray how came such an absurdity as physical depravity ever to obtain a footing in the Church, and be received by such men as the Reformers and their successors?" "Duplex shall answer again; *Ch. Spec.* Vol. 3, p. 464, speaking of physical depravity, he says, 'Such a doctrine could they believe it would suit their corrupt propensities, and give them ample scope for self-indulgence. And *here beyond all question is the reason* why this class of men do receive the doctrine as the truth.'" "But, reverend sir, the Socinians, by using your rule, have to a man denied the Trinity, the atonement, &c." "Yes, and the reason is because the Socinians to a man have been biassed in their common sense, and condemned many things which we might safely adopt." "But the infidels, upon this simple principle of its opposition to their reason, have given up the whole Bible according to Duplex's second rule." "But, sir, let me tell you, the infidels never properly understood the principle; if they had seen its true bearing, they might also have seen that almost every doctrine which they hate and blaspheme, is actually unscriptural, for such is really the case. Had they been less hasty, they might have retained about all their favorite positions, and made a creditable profession of their faith in Christianity into the bargain."

Here ended our second interview.

In much haste, Yours, &c.